

# KING OF THE HIGHLAND HEARTS

by  
WINIFRED DUKE

AUTHOR OF 'SCOTLAND'S HEIR'



*Nation and Athenæum* says: "It is a great story finely told."

*Times* says: "As a record in fictional form, above all as a study of Charles Edward, it is admirable. We get a striking impression of Charles written from a singularly impartial point of view."

*Public Opinion* says: "A book which must be classed as one of the greatest of recent historical novels."

The story deals with Prince Charlie's romantic wanderings in the Highlands after Culloden, his narrow escapes with the aid of loyal helpers like Flora MacDonald, and his seldom-treated tragic after-career on the Continent. Besides telling a tense and vivid story, the book is a fascinating psychological and historical study of the degeneration of a captivating hero into a repellent yet pitiable failure—a Prince without principles, a King without a kingdom—except in his devoted followers' hearts

J. H. C. R. ~  
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BY

WINIFRED DUKE

Author of 'Lord George Murray and the Forty-Five,'  
'The Laird,' 'Scotland's Heir,' &c.

Follow thee, follow thee, wha wadna follow thee?  
Lang hast thou lo'ed and trusted us fairly;  
Charlie, Charlie, wha wadna follow thee?  
King o' the Hieland hearts, bonnie Prince Charlie.

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TO  
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# PROLOGUE :

## AFTER CULLODEN

### I.

THE long green twilight of an April evening in the far north was slowly merging into the grey and primrose dimness of a spring night. The faint, tentative twitters of building birds were hushed, save for an occasional liquid call from a solitary thrush. Winter had lingered that year—a year of grim memories for Scotland—and her iron hand could still be traced in the sealed buds, the faint powdering of young emerald, frost-nipped and hindered, the stiff ridges of frozen snow capping the bald mountain-tops. A wind that had cried all day about the mournful landscape sent its voice, rising eerily in the creeping dusk, down the high passes, fluttering the plaids of the motionless sentries, deepening the chill in the hearts and bodies of the broken remnant of a gallant force of men. They had gathered there at Ruthven of Badenoch, by individuals and scattered units, finding their way, in some cases, through mere chance ; in others, after a hasty message passed from lip to fugitive's lip. In their eyes, though none spoke it, dwelt the horror of those who had lately looked upon unbelievable and terrible things. They had seen kinsman and clansman hewn down by merciless shot and sword. They had witnessed the butchery in cold blood of the wounded and dying. They had watched, in their own stubborn retreat, the smoke rising from sheiling and roof-tree, fired by a pitiless



conqueror's hands. Their anger, as much as their loyalty, sent each man's fingers itching to his claymore, revenge the motive-force to drive the weapon home. Schooled to patience, they waited—waited the word of direction, guidance, counsel, from the Prince who was as much a helpless fugitive as any of themselves, yet still their Prince and leader. From Lord George Murray downwards to the humblest Highlander, none doubted that he would arrive and put himself at their head again.

In the end house of Ruthven village, a mere collection of turf-roofed stone huts, a man sat writing by the last of the daylight. The room which he occupied was scarcely larger than a good-sized cupboard. A few squares of sodden peat smouldered sulkily, the smoke eddying and escaping through a hole in the roof. The floor was dank and uneven, the square of window framing a stem of tall pine against a background of green sky. At intervals a sound of hoarse coughing broke the silence.

The dusk, deepened by coming rain, was closing in. Lord George Murray's busy pen halted. He stood up, and moved towards a door dividing the poor room from a smaller inner one. The tall clansman, sentinel on the threshold, looked round and flattened himself aside. Lord George spoke to him in Gaelic, shook his head over the answer to his question, and walked forward. 'How does your Grace find yourself this evening?' he asked quietly.

The Duke of Perth, a mere heap of clothes and two burning eyes, struggled to speak. 'Your lordship is very good. I think I am



easier.' A fresh bout of coughing contradicted the words.

Lord George frowned. The room was miserably uncomfortable, damp, smoky, and airless. The sick man lay supine on a pile of plaids, breathing rapidly, shallowly. Looking into the haggard face, the other knew that death only waited to step over the threshold.

'There is—no news?' The query was a mere whisper.

'Not yet. We must have patience.'

The Duke sighed. 'For ourselves, it is easier to endure the loss and ruin occasioned by our defeat, but the Prince.—Does your lordship think that His Royal Highness will come?'

Lord George started. 'I would not insult His Royal Highness by imagining otherwise. What else would he do? His army is waiting, the men eager and ready, their leaders no less so.'

The Duke murmured in the detached fashion of the very sick: 'A woman said that I should die at sea.'

Lord George sat by him, grimly ready to discern his wants, the while his military eye and mind reviewed the situation. The remains of the Prince's army were masters of the high, inaccessible passes between Inverness and Ruthven. There was abundant store of cattle, and much meal at Inverness itself. They were stronger in numbers than before the battle, through being reinforced by Cluny's men, who, too late for the onslaught of Culloden, had fallen in with the orderly remnant of survivors making for Ruthven. Lord George had instantly utilised these

MacPhersons as rear-guard, and knew that he could rely upon their chief's support for the continuance of the campaign.

He had his suspicions, nebulous, uneasy, but as yet uncorroborated, of the Prince's plans and whereabouts. On the morning of the 18th a messenger had arrived at Ruthven, bearing a letter for Cluny. It was dated from Gortleg at nine o'clock of the previous night, and had been written by MacLeod, the Prince's aide-de-camp, at Charles's direction. Airy and unconcerned in tone, it bade Cluny and his men rally at Fort Augustus with all possible speed. During the day stragglers and survivors coming from that neighbourhood reached Ruthven, bearing no intelligence of any body of men gathered at the ruined fort. Was the letter a blind? Others, arriving later, brought news that the Prince had gone to Clanranald's country, the scene of his landing. Lord George had written to Charles the day after Culloden, scolding and reproaching him, and winding up with resigning his own commission for the second time. Certain phrases from the letter lingered satisfyingly in his memory. He had said no more than the Prince deserved, and ended by stating that they would await His Royal Highness's directions for everything.

The letter had been written and dispatched on April 17th. It was now the 20th, and no word had come from Charles.

There was a footstep in the outer room. The Duke of Athol, a gaunt ghost, limped in. Lord George looked from one to the other of the two ghastly faces, and a shudder went over him.

Was this to be the end? Better by far to have fallen under the enemy's grape-shot or sabre-thrust at Drummossie four days ago, than to wait here, companioned by the sick and dying, expecting one who never came.

His look questioned the new-comer mutely. The Duke shook his head.

The sick man had fallen into a doze. The brothers moved slowly away, glad to exchange the closeness of the death-chamber for the comparative freshness of the other room. The Duke seated himself stiffly and painfully in the rude chair which Lord George had lately vacated. The attitude, the hopelessness, the droop of his whole figure proclaimed him a broken man. 'This waiting is harder than anything else,' he said.

Lord George shrugged his shoulders at the words. 'So many things may delay His Royal Highness.' He paced the rough floor, chafing because of the confined space.

'I thought, possibly, a messenger might have met with disaster.' The Duke spoke dully, unemotionally.

'I expect no messenger. The Prince will arrive in person.'

The little room was ominously silent as Lord George's stern voice ceased. Spring rain, beginning tentatively, now falling in real earnest, sounded loud and intimidating. The coughing from the inner room broke out afresh.

'What does the surgeon think?' The Duke motioned towards the doorway beyond which James Drummond lay in his last weakness.

'A few days, probably less. There is no

hope.' Lord George spoke harshly, his brow clouded. He and the Duke of Perth, Prince Charles's lieutenant-generals throughout the fated campaign, had never been intimate, much less admiring of one another. The stronger mind and body, the more arrogant and assured personality, secretly despised the Duke's gentle ineffectiveness. Yet now that the end of their connection was at hand, as well as the end of so much else, Lord George's conscience rebuked him for his unspoken contempt. Little pictures of the Duke kept appearing before his tired eyes: a slim figure, toiling in shirt-sleeves in the trenches round Carlisle, the wind fluttering the linen back from the thin arms; the bowed form by the fireplace at the fatal council at Derby, ending in the chiefs' decision to turn back; the lined face and sleepless eyes in the breaking dawn as the army struggled home that grey April morning of the retreat from Nairn. The body, broken, lay in that miserable room, awaiting the last struggle which should free the gallant spirit, but the soul . . . 'A string of beads and a priest's patter. How these Catholics cling to their mummeries,' Lord George reflected irritably.

His thoughts took shape in words. 'I would pray that the Prince might come soon, if only to end His Grace's trials. Myself, I think he cannot die without seeing His Royal Highness again. He told Lord John that he must live for that.'

The Duke of Athol struggled stiffly to his feet. 'It will be a long dying, then.'

Lord George's hands clenched at his sides. 'You mean——?'



‘That the Prince will never come.’

There was no sound save the rain, the coughing, increasingly weaker, and Lord George’s hard breathing. When he spoke it was in the dazed, uncertain fashion of a man who has received a mortal sword-thrust from a familiar friend. ‘I—do not understand.’

Suddenly the red deepened in his weather-stained cheek. He remembered how, sore, wounded, exasperated, he had poured out his soul, embittered by the grievances and aggravations of months, in his letter to the absent Prince. He had seldom paused, scarcely erased, hardly waited to read it over before arranging for its dispatch. As he watched the messenger’s tartans recede and smallen, the first satisfaction, albeit sour and brackish, that he had known since Culloden, stirred in his breast. And now, his brother’s look, his grave words, woke a slumbering fear and latent regret. Lord George knew Charles Edward’s pride and obstinacy. He could picture the receipt of the letter—the fair head thrown back, the brown eyes clouded in anger, the weak determination not to expose himself to his lieutenant-general’s just censure and rebuke. If he must endure these on paper, at least he would not undergo them in person. For the sake of spiting and disappointing Lord George, of shielding himself from blame bestowed to his face, Charles was capable of deserting and abandoning his army. Yet—was he? Lord George remembered him stubborn, impossible to convince, driving his advisers to distraction, but no coward, no recreant. If he did not come, at least no concern for his personal safety would



sway him. 'He *must* come,' Lord George muttered savagely.

The Duke, habitually in awe of his younger brother, for once spoke his mind plainly. 'I do not think it, brother George. I have been acquainted with His Royal Highness longer than you. From what I know of him, he will not come.'

Lord George cried out like a man adrift upon towering seas. 'Then what of his army, his poor followers? Does one defeat mean that the campaign must be abandoned? The men are primed to fight, to have their revenge. Now is the hour. If we delay, or should His Royal Highness refuse to lead us, as well surrender to the Government at once.' His voice thickened, broke. 'For mine own part, I would that Drum-mossie had seen the end of me!'

He said no more, but moving to the mean window, stared out unseeingly. The green sky was slate and sullen now, the silver of the pine a dirty smear against the deepening night.

## II.

INTO the confusion and half-hearted preparations of a temporary camp there broke feet and shouting. Lord George turned from the window, but made no movement otherwise. A score of clansmen came running towards the cottage, demanding the Duine Firinneach. For a second life stirred in the embers of Lord George's extinguished hopes. Then he saw that the messenger, ragged, travel-torn, wore the Drummond tartan, and carried in his hand what appeared to be a roll of blood-stained cloth. The Duke of Athol went

out, spoke to the exhausted figure, and returned noiselessly. Lord George's lifted eyebrows asked the question which his lips were too proud to utter.

'It is His Grace of Perth's standard-bearer. He has brought his colours,' was the answer.

Lord George, still moving like a man too sorely hurt to heed his surroundings, beckoned the clansman into the little room.

A strange access of strength had come to the dying Perth. He had raised himself, and his voice sounded clear and strong. 'If you would help me, my lord, I think that I could wait upon His Royal Highness.'

'It is not the Prince, my Lord Duke.'

'Not? Then——?'

'The standard-bearer with your Grace's colours.'

Like a candle-flame that gutters and goes out in a draught, the spurious strength deserted the shattered body. 'Pray bring him in. It is so dark . . .' The hands groped aimlessly, blindly.

Lord George took from the spent clansman the precious colours. 'There is blood upon them. I think you bought them dearly,' he told the Drummond.

The man's face, fatigue-scored, smoke-blackened, dazed, creased into a dreadful smile.

The flag, half-unrolled, lay on the reeking floor beside the Duke. He was too weak to touch it, but the dim eyes were glad. 'Poor as I am, I would rather than a thousand guineas that they are safe,' he murmured.

Lord George signed to the clansman to come out of earshot. Others of his tribe were crowding in, grief for their chief mingling with pride in this staunch follower. They touched the flag, awe in

their stern faces. Lord George thought of that other death in a mean room at Falkirk, the Prince's transient distress, Æneas MacDonald's young soul drifting away on the vast tide of death—life's flowering and promise hindered, unfulfilled. This end was the more pitiful.

He asked low, in Gaelic, 'You bring no news?'

The man answered in the same tongue: 'For two days and nights I have been amongst the rocks like a hunted beast. The redcoats have the fox's cunning to spy out the wounded and the fugitive, while the weasel has more mercy on the caught rabbit than they on their captured. I carried an Athol Murray on my back until his wounds weakened him so that he could no longer cling to my shoulders, and a dead man was my burden instead.'

Lord George shuddered. 'Could he speak? Had he any word of others in the Athol Brigade?'

The Drummond shook his dishevelled head. 'He said that he saw Shian carried wounded to a barn, and later, flames breaking through the roof, lit by Hanoverian hands. Kynachan I last saw defending himself with a broken sword against two dragoons. They say that he perished with Shian.'

Lord George Murray turned away. These men had been two of his officers, and their fates did not bear picturing. Remorse died, and a fierce, blinding resentment against the Prince came instead. The bloodshed, death, and misery, as yet only in their springing, which were to overwhelm Scotland for many months had their birth in a Stuart's insatiate ambition and reckless

selfishness. Small wonder if Charles did not come to Ruthven. From the ruin of the noblest house, to the burning of the meanest croft, the responsibility lay at his door. 'If he had never landed at Eriska, with a tongue of silver and a tale of lying promises, how much Scotland had been spared!'

A faint sound from the heap of plaids reached Lord George's ears. He went across and knelt beside it. The eyes that looked up at him were cloudy with coming death, but the spirit was still courageous, the mind clear. He stooped to catch the barely audible words: 'The Prince has not come?'

Lord George shook his head. 'It is scarce likely that he will come now.'

The tone, the hint of leashed-in anger, penetrated the mists of semi-consciousness creeping over brain and body like a slow tide across a vacant shore. The grey lips parted in an effort to speak. 'They say, my lord, that the dying are tyrannous.' The words were a ghostly whisper. 'I would prove that true for the little space of time left to me here. Will your lordship make me a promise?'

The stern, erect figure, kneeling stiffly on the damp floor, grew yet more rigid. 'I must hear what your Grace wishes before I can do that.'

The Duke sighed. 'It concerns the Prince. He is young and headstrong, but very lovable. Your lordship speaks truth. He will not come—now.' A long sigh lifted the tartan covering the dying man's breast. 'It may be, my lord, that you and His Royal Highness will not meet again. It may be that God will yet set him in St James's,

and you at his right hand. I cannot tell. I am going—soon—where these things will be of little moment.' He paused. 'It is very dark.'

Lord George turned his head and called out a curt order. After delay a rude lamp and a rough piece of lighted wood were brought in. The place was like a miniature inferno; the smoky glance of the crude illuminations thrown over the huddled group of figures by the doorway, the bare walls and floor, the two forms, the prone, the kneeling, alike as motionless as if the death which waited to complete the ruin wrought in one of them by weakness and fever had struck both into their frozen immobility. The thread of a voice went on: 'If you should be brought face to face with the Prince, my lord, remember that a dying man's last request was that you should deal gently with His Royal Highness. We have been together through very much, and though we did not always see alike, I have honoured you for a brave man, a wise leader, and a loyal adherent of the King and his son. May I have your hand?'

'Your Grace is holding it.'

'I can feel nothing. I can see nothing. Your voice is very far away. Give me that promise, I beg, my lord.'

There was a long pause. The smoke caught Lord George's throat. He coughed harshly. The fingers under his touch relaxed and fell supine. Lord John Drummond, the Duke's brother, had come in and was standing near. Lord George's voice, harsh and stern, uttered a curt compromise. 'If the Prince and I should meet, my Lord Duke, I will endeavour to remember this hour, and your



wish. I trust His Royal Highness's paths and mine will lie far apart. I pray that it may be so. I am only human. When I think of what he has brought many to, and of the fate which awaits most of us, I could find it in my heart to envy your Grace.'

He heard a little sigh. Lord John trod nearer with a whisper about a priest.

'Your lordship would wish to be alone with your brother.' Lord George moved stiffly to his feet. 'And I have many matters to attend to. We cannot, dare not, remain here longer than to-morrow.'

The Duke did not heed. He was murmuring something about the sea.

Lord George went out into the night. Although April, it was colder than many a winter's dusk. He paced up and down, seeing in haphazard patchwork pictures from the past months. The room at Perth into which he had been ushered to offer his sword and allegiance to the Prince, the tall young form, graceful and gracious, the die cast as his lips touched the extended hand. Holyrood, the triumph and glory on the surface, the cross-currents of envy, treachery, malice, and distrust beneath. Derby, wet streets and scared faces peering from the windows. Falkirk, and the mad exultation of that glorious, overwhelming charge through storm and darkness at the head of his men. The grey sleet on Drummossie, pitiful shroud over carnage and slaughter, and the gathering at Ruthven, the reunion with chiefs, officers, common men, all bearing a tale of disaster, the waiting, as lingering, as hopeless,

as the Duke of Perth's slow dying, for one who did not come.

He paced up and down for hours in the starlight, his mind a chaos of perplexities and uncertainties. His own future was as black as the sky behind the pine trunks. If he succeeded in making his way out of the country, a second exile, with no hope of pardon or recall, and the bitterness of poverty for himself and his dependants, awaited him. Others were in as grim a plight. His brother, enfeebled, powerless, must throw himself upon the doubtful mercy of kinsfolk or acquaintance. Lochiel, last heard of sorely wounded, would be loth to desert his clan. There were numerous lesser men, who had sacrificed their all to follow the Stuart, and now found themselves faced with utter ruin, their lives and liberties menaced. Lord George thought bitterly of the poor clansmen, in many cases forced out, in other instances following their chiefs in a blind loyalty. Butchery, starvation, trial, transportation, or death was the cup that so many must drain. And the author of it all? Did he sleep, sheltered by the roof of one more in the unnumbered catalogue of men faithful to him, or did he lie, wakeful, fearful, under the cold spring sky and the winking, watching stars? In the night's immensity, nature's vastness, how small, how futile men's lives and little angers seemed. There was, there must be, a purpose behind this blind ruin and uncounted miseries. Lord George bowed his head. 'Lord, Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another——'

He turned, startled out of his mood, part prayer, half reverie. Lord Nairne, panting, was

coming towards him. 'My lord, a messenger from His Royal Highness!'

At last! Though Charles had not come in person, no doubt the letter held promise of his doing so, and an adequate explanation of his delay. The leaders of the remnant gathered round as Lord George tore open the missive, deriding himself because his hands shook. One single sentence danced before his eyes. '*Let every man seek his own safety in the best way he can.*'

Words were useless. The Prince had abandoned his army, his enterprise, sullenly accepting the defeat of Culloden as a final disaster, and had vanished from the ken of those whom he had boasted of leading to victory and the throne. No man dared to speak as the letter went from hand to hand. Lord George's lined face was terrible in its tired anger as he received it again. Lord John Drummond, stealing a few seconds from his dying brother, at length ventured to break the dread silence.

'Your lordship is our leader now.' A deep murmur of assent broke out. 'What do you advise, my lord?'

The paper dropped from Lord George's hold. A cold little wind whisked it away among the tree-trunks. He halted to stare at the bewildered clansmen gathered there, ignorant and patient, the officers whom he had directed and fought beside through long months of warfare. His laugh echoed eerily down the high passes, chilling as the wind which lifted plaid or hair. 'There is nothing to be done save to obey His Royal Highness's orders.' His voice cracked, broke. 'Let every man seek his own safety in the best way he can.'

BOOK I.  
THE HUNTED HEAD

‘Now, gentlemen and ladies, who read this, believe it to be a true and genuine short account of hardships that happened . . . but, for brevity’s sake, I have not made mention of many wants the Prince suffered, the many ill-dressed diets he got, the many bad beds he lay in, the many cold and wet beds in the open fields, &c., with all which he cheerfully and patiently put up.’—  
*Journal of Ned Burke.*



## CHAPTER I.

‘Escaped! so let him; he is hedged too fast  
Within the circuit of our English pale  
To steal out of our ports, or leap the walls  
Which guard our land; the seas are rough and wider  
Than his weak arms can tug with.’

JOHN FORD.

**D**AWN, timid and distrustful, withdrew herself from the embrace of night. Gradually the outlines of material objects became distinct: the limbs and trunks of trees, the humped forms of great rocks, the steely, livid waters of the loch over which Invergarry Castle, gaunt and dark, was set. It was a cold, cloudy morning, with little sun. The sky, high, pale, remote, hung a wan, colourless canvas. Bird-notes, singly and in chorus, alone gave life to the deserted region, where the untenanted, comfortless house of the MacDonalds formed a fitting refuge for a ruined and fugitive Prince.

He slept until late into the afternoon. The others who were with him—Sheridan, O’Sullivan, MacDonald the priest, O’Neil, MacLeod, his aide-de-camp, and MacLeod’s servant, Ned Burke—withdrawn a little from their Prince, talked, low-voiced, amongst themselves. Charles should not, dared not linger, yet none liked to be the one to rouse him from that exhausted sleep. In its unconsciousness he might forget the miseries of past weeks, the overwhelming disaster of the

previous day, the sights and sounds that did not bear narration or recall.

He stirred at last, drawing a long, sighing breath. He was prone upon the bare floor, a borrowed plaid, lent gladly, as pillow, another for covering. His voice, sharpened, imperious, rang across the room to the patient group. 'Sheridan!'

The Irishman, limping with fatigue and saddle-stiffness after a rough ride of nearly forty miles, came to his side. 'Your Royal Highness is awake?' he asked softly.

'Yes. Where are we, Sherry?' The Prince sat up and stared about him. 'I have dreamed, I think. There were sleet, and wounded men, and after that I seem to have been riding—oh! for nights and nights.' He clutched Sheridan's hands. 'Was it a dream?'

Sheridan answered reluctantly, 'No dream, sir.'

'Then—then'—he stammered, with wild gaze—'I am here, defeated, hunted. Is it morning, Sherry?'

'It is long past morning. I think the day is so well advanced that we must be near the afternoon.'

Charles sat kicking the floor like a sullen child. 'I am hungry,' he complained.

They had ransacked the castle whilst he slept, but its presses and hidie-holes yielded nothing in the way of food. Burke had gone further afield in the vain search, returning triumphant, bearing a netted salmon from the Garry. With difficulty they cooked it over a grudging fire. Hunger served for salt and sauce. The clumsily torn and ill-prepared morsels were a royal feast to men who

had tasted neither food nor drink since their brief halt at Gortleg the night before. They quenched their thirst with draughts of cold spring water. Charles ate and drank, his brow clouded. The rude meal recalled the supper in the primitive cottage on the night of his landing. The peat-reek was in his nostrils, the splash of rain on thatch and shore outside in his ears, the certainty of victory, of triumph, of a crown, mounting in his breast. He looked at the tired, discouraged faces surrounding him now. Of the seven who were his companions that night, only Sheridan and O'Sullivan remained to him. Kelly was in France, Strickland dead at Carlisle, the Duke of Athol—where? The remembrance of him recalled Lord George, whom, in his sullen reflections, the Prince already blamed for the defeat of yesterday. 'We should have pressed on to Nairn,' he mused sourly. 'Failing that, we should not have fought. My Lord George was the sole instrument of our losing the battle.'

His thoughts went sombrely to and fro, distorted by a tired body and fatigue-drugged mind. His companions censured him tacitly, he realised, for having appointed no rendezvous in case of a defeat. Why should he, when defeat seemed as unlikely, as incredible as all that was now befalling him? Confused, alarmed, he had dictated to MacLeod at Gortleg the letter for Cluny, bidding the remains of the Highland army meet him at Fort Augustus. Later, during the dreary ride thither, doubts assailed him. There were large parties of Hanoverian horse about the neighbourhood. He might be pursued, recognised, taken. Fear goaded him to press on,

regardless of the looks of remonstrance which met him from his companions. Only Sheridan dared to expostulate openly. Charles silenced him with a few haughty words. Afterwards, fatigue and hunger stilled complaint or rebuke. Invergarry, empty, deserted, unfriendly, seemed a haven of refuge, and in sleep the little party found a temporary and merciful oblivion.

Appetites satisfied, the need for definite plans arose afresh. Charles was not easy to handle. The utmost that he would concede was to press forward to Glen Pean, and there await news of his army. Another problem then presented itself. Which were to be his companions?

The rest looked at Sir Thomas Sheridan. Plucky, indomitable, he was confessedly an old man, and the impossible cruelty of subjecting him to further fatigues and exertion was felt by all. The Prince put it into words. Sheridan shook his head vehemently. 'I will never leave His Royal Highness,' he declared.

Charles was moved to a rare unselfishness. 'Not for my sake, Sherry, if I ask it?'

They were standing apart from the others. The Prince laid slim hands on Sheridan's shoulders, looked into the familiar face. 'There will be many hardships, much rough travelling. You could not support the fatigues. Sherry, I *command* you to go.'

Sheridan reiterated stubbornly: 'I passed my word to His Majesty that I would never forsake your Royal Highness.'

Charles bit his lip. 'I will write my orders that you were to leave me. You can show them to Papa.'

One of the party produced rough materials for the purpose. Charles wrote and signed. Their eyes met as Sheridan took the paper from him. He flushed, and turned away. Well he knew that if Sheridan were once safe on foreign soil, he would be loth to seek King James with this lamentable tale of failure and defeat.

Charles gave his orders briefly. O'Neil was to remain at Invergarry, and direct any who passed to follow Charles to the coast; Sheridan was to take what road he judged best in order to fall in with fugitives making their way thither, and to reach France with such speed and safety as might be. To MacLeod the Prince handed a written message for those assembled at Ruthven. The watchers saw that he only scribbled a sentence before folding and sealing the document. There was no time for sentiment, none for leave-taking. Charles exchanged his gay tartan coat and buff waistcoat for the rough outer garment of Burke the guide. Burke led out the horses, who in the matter of provender had fared little better than their riders. The Prince clung to Sheridan in a long embrace before both mounted. Words were useless, hopeless. The bitterness of death was in their parting, a wrenching asunder as final, as torturing as the last dividing of soul from body. The Prince, companioned only by O'Sullivan and the priest, dependent for direction and counsel upon these two and the uncouth Burke, vanished from Sheridan's sight into the cloudy distance. Sheridan's last picture of him was the weary twist of the drooping young body in the saddle, as Charles turned to wave an arm in forlornly-brave farewell. He knew his Carluccio. For a few hours,



possibly for a few days, Charles would grieve for him, miss him, regret him. Then he would yield to the companionship, the sympathy, the spoiling, which had never failed him from those surrounding him. 'If my Lord George Murray could have unbent sometimes, petted him in place of scolding, maybe his affairs would have prospered more,' the Irishman mused.

The day drifted by, cold, unchanged, with great wool-packs of dirty cloud crawling and shifting across a dull-hued sky. At intervals rain fell, thin, depressing, wetting rain. The Prince's way ran for some ten miles close to the verge of Loch Lochy, a grey, mournful mass of water. Then the track turned sharply to the west and went through the Mile Dorcha. It was a gloomy, tunnel-like place of fears and shadows, meet setting for Tearlach of the fallen fortunes who traversed it. Achnacarry was not far off. The thoughts of the travellers strayed to Lochiel, whose loyalty and service upon the Prince's rash landing had made the Rising a possible thing. Would the Cameron chief see his home again, or did he lie amongst the unnumbered, unburied dead on Drum Mossie? Charles stared about him : at the wild, indifferent country ; the ghostly shapes of great mountains, dun, immense, against the over-arching sky ; the weary length of Loch Arkaig, to the head of which his jaded horse must stumble before he reached the poor steading of Donald Cameron of Glen Pean, which promised shelter. The land was sad-coloured, hopeless, untouched by the magic of spring and April. Once or twice they heard the voices of lambs. At rare intervals

they saw in the distance a little croft, the midget figure of a man toiling to and fro sowing the dry rigs of ploughed land, rooks following him, dipping and crying. Evening was well advanced. Bird-song had dropped to sleepy twitters, and a fine rain veiled the landscape, making loch and mountains seem as though viewed through tears. Charles was so weary by the time that the heather-thatched roof and humble outlines of the cottage appeared in sight that he could scarcely dismount. The place, its meagre land enclosed by low walls of rough stone, looked over wild, remote country and towards towering mountain-peaks, folding in and out of each other against piled clouds.

The three helped the Prince into the living-room and gathered about him anxiously. He huddled, exhausted, in a chair, his head drooping, sleep clogging his faculties, his whole magnificent body, 'built for war,' as Lord Elcho grudgingly declared, shattered by strain and physical fatigue. He murmured Sheridan's name as Burke, rough but kindly, began to remove some of his soiled garments. A little shower of gold pieces fell out of the muddied spatter-dashes which Burke drew off the long limbs. He gathered up the coins and put them into the slack hands. Charles gave him a drowsy smile. 'Thou art an honest friend, and shalt continue to be my servant,' he said sleepily.

Burke, stiff with weariness, knelt stolidly on the earthen floor, as the Prince settled his head against the Highlander's shoulder and fell asleep.

The night went by, to give place to another day of cloud and high wind. Partly to recover

from his fatigue, partly to await possible news of his army, the Prince lingered at Glen Pean until the late afternoon. He was restless and ill at ease. Sometimes he paced the living-room floor with knitted brow and shut lips. Oftener he went outside and stood looking into the grey world, the grey distance, scanning the immense expanse of motionless water, staring up at the withdrawn and indifferent mountains that hemmed him in. The fear of the hunted was upon him. France, which promised a measure of safety, seemed his only goal. Behind every rock he spied a waiting enemy. Any winding track might be the path to guide a file of Hanoverian soldiers to his lurking-place. By five in the afternoon, his physical weariness in a measure shaken off, he urged his companions to start afresh on their wanderings. The horses must be abandoned. They would have to toil on foot through Glen Pean to the head of Loch Morar, and from there face the climb over almost inaccessible mountains to the Braes of Morar and possible refuge at Meoble. The wind had died down, but an angry sky of hurrying cloud gave sure promise of storm and rain upon the morrow.

At four in the morning of April 19th, numb with utter fatigue, Charles stumbled over the threshold of a small hut hard by a wood. The place was used for shearing sheep. Tufts of fleece clung to the rough walls, and a warm animal smell hung in the musty atmosphere. The fugitives had fallen in with Angus MacEachine, MacDonald of Borradale's son-in-law. Borradale House had sheltered the Prince upon his first

landing. The young man, a surgeon to the Glengarry regiment throughout the campaign, found the active, athletic Prince sorely in need of his professional services and hospitality. Charles was in a stupor of complete exhaustion. They pressed food and wine upon him, but he refused both. For days and nights he seemed to have been stumbling along a rutted track of road, and then scrambling, limbs and body weighted with fatigue, over terrible, nearly impenetrable mountains. Enormous cloud-wraiths wreathed their summits. The travellers felt lost in smoky vapour, pigmy forms in this vast world of mist and rain. The harsh cry and soaring form of a solitary eagle were the only sign of life. His friends helped him to bed, and left him in the sour little room, wrapped in a sleep profound and dreamless. A wind sighed through the thin wood, and again a wan dawn smiled over the heart-broken and distraught country.

For a whole day of drizzling rain the Prince remained at MacEachine's, recruiting his exhausted energies. Between smiting showers he forced himself to walk about the little wood, by way of preparation for further exertions. Nightfall saw him once more on his travels. The small party pushed forward to the coast—O'Sullivan by turns voluble and taciturn; the priest silent, fingering his rosary; Burke, eyes and ears alert for any danger that might menace his precious charge. The Prince himself was alternately vivacious and irritable. At six in the morning the sun, weak, fitful, at length broke through the clouds and warmed the world. There were touches of spring discernible—cold blues and milder airs in sky and

atmosphere, the swoop and wheeling of swallows, the green of young larches in a laird's plantation, the voice of a burn swollen with rain. At length the crash and thunder of waves breaking on a distant shore drowned lesser noises. They had reached the coast.

Charles's thoughts were many-coloured as he stared at the familiar strand and the blue lines of white-tipped water. Here, less than nine months before, he had landed—confident, eager, enthusiastic—seven followers at his back, scant toll of arms, money, or adherents to advance his Cause, but here he had gathered some of the noblest names in Scotland around his standard. At Borradale House, guarded only by the Clan-ranald MacDonalds, he had spent eight crowded, glorious days, arranging for the ceremony at Glenfinnan, spinning wider and wider webs to enmesh the chiefs whose allegiance he coveted and who still hung back. Not a year had elapsed since that week of sunshine and growing victory. Now, he stood upon the same spot, but how changed, how bitter were his circumstances and surroundings. It was April and spring, yet winter's ban lay everywhere in snow and numbing cold. He was penniless, save for a few gold coins, his garments were soiled and torn, a great price had been set upon his head, and he believed every man in Scotland alert to earn it. His army, disbanded, defeated, no longer had his leadership. His officers were fugitives like himself. The brief, colourful time of transient triumph was exchanged for danger, uncertainty, nauseating failure. He stared at the sea which he



longed to have between himself and his enemies, blinding tears in his eyes. 'Go to Borradale House,' he bade O'Sullivan harshly. 'I will lurk in the woods until you bring me word of any there.'

At Glenbeasdale, the tiny village which was part of MacDonald of Borradale's estate, Charles found friends and sympathisers, mostly survivors from Culloden. MacDonald of Barisdale, bitter foe of his cousin Lochgarry, truculent, gruff, arrived from Glenmoriston with elaborate and plausible excuses for his own absence from the battle, and a lamentable tale of Secretary Murray's health; young Clanranald, whose reluctance to support the Prince on his landing had fully justified itself; and Charles's other secretary, John Hay of Restalrig. There were smaller men, who had staked and lost all, but each was keenly anxious that the campaign should be continued.

The Prince consented to a council, wherein all might state their views. He locked his lips upon his own plans, and smiling with tired mouth, listened to the arguments and discussion going on around him. The sea was blue, seen through the windows of Borradale House, and the crying of strong-winged gulls came on the spring air. Charles's eyes grew wary. Even here his safety was menaced. Any vessel that drifted into that glistening bay would have him at the mercy of its guns. His mind darted to and fro, planning, plotting, encouraging this idea, dismissing the next, until all coherent thought was focussed to one point—*Escape! escape!*

He smiled his old smile, and bent an attentive

ear to young Clanranald's words. 'Your Royal Highness's Cause is not lost,' the Highlander was urging. 'At least wait upon the mainland, sir, until something is learned of the numbers and condition of your forces.'

Charles shook his head. 'It is not safe. My person——'

The young man struck the table. 'I will build four huts in the deepest recesses of the woods, sir. Your Royal Highness can lurk there with perfect safety. I myself will then voyage to the Isles to discover how affairs are; and if needful, I can seek out a ship should your flight become a matter of urgency.' His blue eyes blazed. Reluctant, cautious, at the start, he had finally hazarded his life and prospects, and now was strenuous that the Cause which had ruined him should not be abandoned.

Charles, always stubborn, would promise nothing.

The priest and O'Sullivan had both given him advice which coincided with his own secret inclinations. They urged that it was useless to continue with the campaign. The defeat had been overwhelming and complete, the dissensions amongst the leaders contributing to it were certain to break out afresh, the lack of money and provisions presented insuperable obstacles. They advised him to remain no longer than to allow of definite news arriving. In the meanwhile he must make his own preparations as stealthily and swiftly as possible. Who was this fellow, Donald MacLeod, a Skye man, who as pilot and guide had assisted Kinlochmoidart to transfer to Inverness a quantity of gold landed

last December from a Spanish vessel for the Prince's use? Why not utilise his services in a secret passage to the Western isles? Charles imperiously ordered Kinlochmoidart—bidden to Borradaile by a letter detailing the defeat at Culloden—to send for this Donald.

The woods of Borradaile were green with spring as Donald MacLeod walked through them, intent upon his summons. Far away a cow lowed, and in the distance there rang the crying of sheep. No human being was visible except a young man in Highland dress, pacing impatiently up and down a small clearing. Donald looked long—and fell to his knees.

The Prince, his royalty poorly disguised by his plain attire, walked quickly forward. 'Are you Donald MacLeod of Gualtergill in Skye?' the high, imperious voice demanded.

Donald rose awkwardly. 'Yes, I am the same man, may it please your Majesty, at your service. What is your pleasure wi' me?'

The Prince looked at him with brown, mournful gaze. 'You see, Donald, I am in distress. I therefore throw myself into your bosom, and let you do with me what you like. I hear you are an honest man, and fit to be trusted.'

Tears gathered in Donald's eyes at this appeal. 'Alas, may it please your Excellency, what can I do for you? for I am a poor auld man, and can do very little for myself.' He was bewildered. The Prince, his young king, the darling of Scotland, pleading to him, Donald MacLeod, the Skye crofter. He would spill his life's blood gladly for Charles, but what service

did the Prince require that was within his power to render him?

Charles shrugged his shoulders and smiled. He was tall and straight as a slim birch-tree against the thin green setting of young woodland. 'Why'—he spoke winningly—'the service I am to put you upon I know you can perform very well. It is that you may go with letters from me to Sir Alexander MacDonald and the Laird of MacLeod. I desire, therefore, to know if you will undertake this piece of service; for I am really convinced that these gentlemen, for all that they have done, will do all in their power to protect me.'

He waited, anticipating a stammered acceptance of the commission. To his annoyed surprise MacLeod shook his head. 'I would do anything but that, your Majesty. It is a task I would not undertake if you should hang me for refusing.'

Charles gave a short, annoyed laugh. 'Why? Why?'

Donald stared. 'What! Does not your Excellency know that these men have played the rogue to you altogether, and will you trust them for a' that? Na, you mauna do't.' He saw that the Prince was still disappointed and unconvinced. He stepped nearer, dropping his voice in the hush of the listening woods. 'They are searching for your Majesty, and forces along with them, not above a distance of ten or twelve miles by sea from you, but a much greater distance by land. Therefore, the sooner you leave this place the better, not knowing how soon they may come up to it, especially if they should happen to take their course by sea.'

Charles staggered a little. Donald was not imaginative, but as he watched he thought of a royal stag at bay. 'Your Majesty mauna risk it,' he repeated stolidly.

'Then—then'—the Prince pressed both hands to his brow—'I must plan afresh. I hear, Donald, you are a good pilot; that you know all this coast well, and therefore I hope you can carry me safely through the islands where I may look for more safety than I can do here.'

He came closer, bending his face to the older man's. Donald MacLeod swallowed a great sob as he kissed the Prince's fingers, cold with something other than the chill of spring. 'I would do anything in the world for your Majesty, and run any risk except that which would bring you into danger.'

The Prince had been nurtured and trained in a school of secrecy and suspicion. Whilst Donald went forward with preparations, principally the procuring and provisioning of an eight-oared boat and men to row it, Charles had his own schemes. He met the black looks and open remonstrances of young Clanranald and Barisdale with smiles and specious arguments. Once he was in France, he declared coolly, he could do far more for his followers than by lingering here, inviting capture. The two retorted that he should act, and put himself once more at the head of his forces. Charles's answer was to dictate a farewell letter to the chiefs, a tangle of promises, sophistry, and excuse. He advised them to take what measures they considered best, to trust to the direction of Lord George Murray and the Duke of Perth, to await



French assistance, which he was confident of procuring as soon as he reached France. His mind in thus planning had two muddled ideas. His own departure must remain a secret until any possibility of capture was removed. If his French mission succeeded, there would require to be something of an army in Scotland to which to unite the French troops. Already he regretted the hasty order dispatched from Invergarry bidding all to seek their own safety.

The letter, written on April 23rd, was post-dated to April 28th, and enclosed in another letter to Sir Thomas Sheridan. Charles requested that the one to the chiefs might be delayed as long as possible, until he was safely away from the mainland. When he had sealed both letters, he sat looking at them vaguely. Would they reach their destination?

The spring twilight, long and cold in the north, was at last darkening for night when Charles and his companions came down to the little bay. The boat, a dun shape, rocked gently at the water's creamy edge, but the eyes of crew and pilot went beyond her to the horizon, where a pile of angry-looking purple clouds, edged with flame, foreboded a storm. In vain Donald, experienced in the meaning of such ominous signs, argued with the Prince. Charles was resolute to sail. He had disregarded his friends' and advisers' wishes, abandoned his followers, deserted his army. Why should he linger on the mainland now that his high adventure had burned down to the ashes of disillusion and disgraceful defeat? He gave the order to start.

In the boat, plaid-wrapped, he lay between Donald's knees, watching the heaving blue-green water. The stout little craft was crowded, as in addition to the rowers there were the Prince, O'Sullivan, the priest MacDonald, Ned Burke, and O'Neil, who had rejoined Charles that day. The vessel tossed and danced, a mere cockle-shell on the surface of storm-angered sea. The sky, purple as any emperor's mantle, rapidly grew to a blackness which dismayed and affrighted the voyagers. Rain commenced to fall in heavy drops, thickening to a violent downpour. Thunder rumbled menacingly and constantly, accompanied by vivid zigzags of sharp lightning, showing the great mountains of Moidart. The wind howled and raved, sending foam and spray over the boat and its huddled occupants.

The Prince raised himself on one elbow and spoke imperiously. 'Steer to the rock alongside the loch, Donald. I had rather face cannons and muskets than be in such a storm as this.'

He shut his eyes, shrinking from the crack and dazzle of another vivid flash. When the roar of thunder which was its inevitable accompaniment had died down, Donald answered that it would be impossible to return to land. The boat would only be dashed to pieces, and there was no chance of saving themselves in such a sea.

The Prince hugged his plaid closer. 'Then what have you a mind to do?' He breathed hard. Was it possible that he had escaped from the clutches of his enemies only to meet his end, unprepared, unresigned, in this waste of angered waves?

The pilot's voice came calmly in reply. 'Why,

since we are here, we have nothing for it but, under God, to set out to sea directly. Is it not as good for us to be drowned in clean water as to be dashed in pieces upon a rock and to be drowned too?’

The Prince nodded dumbly and lay still, crouched in his plaid. The flying spray beaded it with wet, and soon the incessant rain was soaking through its folds. All on board were in the same plight, everyone expecting momentarily to be struggling in the pitiless sea. The night had turned to a pitchy moonlessness, making their position, with neither compass nor lantern, more desperate. They had lost their course, and a further fear invaded their hearts. What if they should be cast upon some island, such as Skye, where the militia were on the alert for the fugitive Prince? The lightning, which at least broke the dense blackness momentarily, had ceased. The boat, driven by wind and tide, raced along in the darkness for unending hours. The little company were soaked to the skin, as much from the water that had nearly filled the boat, they having nothing with which to bail it out, as from the violent rain. Dawn, a weak gleam of light amid the density of sea and sky, was like a sign from heaven.

The flat, dreary island of Benbecula showed an uncertain outline through grey mist. Donald's skill and local knowledge were here of inestimable service, for he was well acquainted with the place, and steered cunningly. Soaked, shivering, the voyagers hardly dared to hope that they were snatched from death. How could their little craft, after living through such a night, take them between those lifting foam-tipped waves

hurling themselves upon the sharp-toothed rocks framing that dismal isle?

Land under their feet was the first sign of safety. Stiff, chilled, their clammy garments clinging to limbs and body, they set themselves to the task of dragging the boat out of the tide's reach. Their next action was to seek some means of warmth and shelter. Though the worst of the storm was past, a thin rain fell persistently, and the wind that whined over the dreary waste of shore and bleak, uncultivated land had winter on its breath. A bothy, empty, derelict, received the Prince and his companions. One collected driftwood for a fire, which brought a measure of comfort. The rest spread a coarse sail on the bare floor as a couch for Charles. Soon he was sleeping like a child, his hand under his cheek, weariness and danger forgotten.

The pale sea washed and broke upon the low-lying, barren island. The crying of sea-birds filled the air with harsh music. It was Sunday morning, and throughout Highlands and Lowlands kirk and meeting-room were filled with men and women, many of whom, secretly Jacobite, rebels, and Tearlach's lovers, were bidden to give thanks to God for the butchery of Culloden.

## CHAPTER II.

' . . . A night and a day I have been in the deep.

' In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ;

' In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.'—PAUL OF TARSUS.

CLANRANALD'S cows made black blots against the faint green of their surroundings as they strayed over the island, pasturing on the scanty herbage. Benbecula was a flat, treeless expanse, the greater part of it a peat moss, cut up from the east side by arms of the sea and fresh-water lochs. The clansman in charge of the herd kept a wary eye lest any of his chief's property should disappear. Strolling in pursuit of an errant stirk, he came upon a boat on the beach, drawn up above high tide, while at a little distance some dozen men were making for the shelter of an empty hut. The MacDonald gaped after the new-comers. His slow brain groped and reasoned. His duty was to watch his master's cattle. On the other hand, the secret landing of a body of men, fully armed and well clad, behoved to be carried to the chief forthwith. He set off, with long, steady strides, over the wind-dried, sheep-bitten turf.

Clanranald the elder sat at meat with the Rev.



John Macaulay, the parish minister, Neil MacEachain, tutor in his family and distant kinsman, and some few others. The herd's tidings puzzled him. He dispatched a MacDonald to verify them, and continued to make polite conversation with his guests. The minister, a dark-browed, secretive individual, finished his meal in haste and took his departure. His curiosity, still further his suspicions, were aroused. Something advantageous to himself might accrue through the landing of these mysterious strangers.

Charles awakened, his healthy young body restored by some hours' sound sleep to its normal state, after the past night's alarms and fatigues. Two of the boatmen were on guard outside the hut. A third had been responsible for the capture and slaughter of a cow which, in the herd's absence, had incautiously come too near to the sheiling. The others were busy, cutting up the beast, and boiling oatmeal in the pot brought with them, both these usefuls having survived the vicissitudes of the voyage. Charles remonstrated about the cow. It was theft and dishonesty. Donald MacLeod rejoined dryly that they were on Clanranald's territory, and he surely would not grudge a cow for his Prince's use. Charles laughed, shrugging his shoulders, but although he accepted the argument and the savoury meat when it was ready, a little frown still wrinkled his brow.

Footsteps, cautious, nearing. He started up, his hand darting to his weapons. They heard the harsh Gaelic challenge of the sentry and a voice replying in the same tongue. A messenger from Clanranald. Donald translated the words, and

the Prince's fears dropped. He gave orders that his presence on Benbecula might be made known to the chief, and commanded Clanranald's attendance forthwith.

The messenger, dispatched in secret by the minister Macaulay, took a long look at the slim young man framed in the doorless opening of the mean hut, and withdrew. Charles stood a moment, the wind that rustled the bents lifting the damp fair hair from his forehead. His garments had been roughly dried, but bore plain traces of their recent exposure to the elements. He was haggard, pale, yet still unmistakably the Prince, when old Clanranald came to him an hour later.

'Are we to attribute to curiosity or fear your zeal in sending two separate messengers to spy out our condition?' the Prince asked. Clanranald had kissed his hand, and at the royal request was with him inside the hut. Charles's throne was the damp sail which had served him for bed. He sat, long-limbed, graceful, his fingers locked round one knee, smiling at his visitor. The old man, upright before him, frowned.

'I sent one of my clansmen, sir, not two.' The rejoinder was quick and puzzled.

'Two came.' Charles shook his fair, tousled head obstinately. 'The first was a dark fellow, much pock-marked.'

'I know him, but did not send him. And the other, sir?'

'Equally dark, but his face was open.'

'Donald MacDonald. I sent *him*.'

'Then the first?'

'I fear, sir, some spy. My words may sound

inhospitable—your Royal Highness must not think that I am not deeply honoured by your presence here—but is it safe for you to remain?’

The old fear clouded the brown eyes. ‘No. You are very right. I should not linger.’ He called the rest in to a hasty council. There had been talk of their sailing to Stornoway, in the hope of finding there a vessel for France—a project incautiously spoken of to the pock-marked spy—and the best plan seemed to be to carry out their purpose. Charles thanked Clanranald graciously for his shelter and meagre provision. ‘Unpaid-for,’ he added, smiling, and gave his hand to the grave, silent young man, presented to him as Neil MacEachain, who had accompanied the chief. Neil knelt and kissed the long, earth-stained fingers, murmuring something in Gaelic. Afterwards Charles asked Donald MacLeod what this had meant.

The old pilot repeated the words musingly. ‘Though the eagle should forsake her young, and the chief no longer have pity upon the children of his clan, yet would I go with you to the world’s end, and with my dirk and my body shield you from all harm.’

The evening of the following day they sailed for Stornoway in their stout, eight-oared boat through the calm that fell after a windy April sunset. It was five nights since the full moon, which lighted them for a time but was gone behind thin clouds before dawn saw their landing upon Scalpa. The morning was grey, rainy, breathing chill about them as they made their way towards the farm-house of Donald Campbell,

the sole tenant of the bleak island. He was Whig and Hanoverian in sympathies, but principles and politics faded into insignificance before the needs of the wan-faced young man, calling himself Sinclair and professing to be the son of the jovial individual who spoke with a strong Irish accent. The party had decided to describe themselves as the victims of a recent shipwreck, and to sink their identities under assumed names. There had been much merriment over the choice of their new designations. Charles gravely inquired of O'Sullivan his age. Forty-six. '*Eh bien, mon cher*, you can quite well have been my father at twenty. My little Æneas was a father twice ere nineteen.' He laughed—then sighed. 'Mr MacDonald, will you call yourself Graham?' The priest bowed gravely. 'Our friends who row us may retain their own patronymics, I think, with safety, and will respect ours. *En avant!*'

Leaving the Prince and his other companions to the care and compassion of Donald Campbell and his wife, MacLeod borrowed a boat from the same good friends and set out for Stornoway. He found unexpected difficulty in procuring any vessel that would take Charles to the Orkneys, but at length word reached the fugitive that Donald had succeeded in his quest. The few days of comfort, good food, and fires, the absence of pressing danger, had restored the Prince's nerve and strength. He had been very happy in the humble farm-house, making himself thoroughly at home amongst Mrs Campbell's stores, fishing with her young son, strolling about the island in the lengthening spring days. When MacLeod's message came, he was eager to set out, and his

volatile spirits rose at the prospect of parting with MacDonald the priest. 'Mr Graham' designed to return to South Uist. He gave the Prince his blessing, as he had done to the kneeling clans when he rode past their ranks before Falkirk muir. Charles, with a wry recollection of the many peccadillos reluctantly confided to, or extracted from him in confession by, this stern-faced individual, bade him a careless farewell. O'Sullivan, O'Neil, and a guide were his sole companions as he once more commenced his wanderings.

They sailed near to the top of Loch Seaforth, and there took to traversing boggy and abominable country. They had started in fair weather, but soon after nightfall rain descended in steady sheets. There was a violent wind, through which nothing could be heard but the unvaried beat and plash of water from heaven and the squelch of tired feet dragged out of miry ruts. The track, winding around innumerable lochs and small, swift rivers, was too bad to be called a road. The guide, professing familiarity with the island, led them astray, adding eight weary, unnecessary miles to the thirty already covered. 'Highland miles,' the Prince observed grimly, 'are vastly longer than English ones, *mes amis*.' Limbs and body, taut and vigorous at the start, slackened and stumbled as he trudged and slipped. He thought of the march into England, and the Ogilvy upon whose shoulder he leaned as the cold and wind sapped his energies. Was the poor lad dead upon Culloden, or hiding in some glen under his native Grampians? Charles stared



at the forlorn and depressing landscape in the growing light. Great peat-hags and miles of sodden moor met his gaze, gigantic boulders, or the oval of a loch, black and rain-pitted, but there seemed no human habitation nor any prospect of shelter. They had been walking for more than twelve hours in continuous rain. The Prince's feet were cut to pieces, the brogues upon them worn through and tied with pack-thread. He rated the guide for losing his way. As he was unable to frame his feelings in Gaelic, the soaked figure plodding stolidly ahead could make little out of the hoarse, excited torrent of mingled French and English. 'There wass no need for herself to be vexed,' he remarked. 'That iss Stornoway.'

Soaked to the skin, hungry, angered, Charles dispatched the guide the two miles to the town to find Donald MacLeod, bidding him bring or send brandy and bread-and-cheese, as they were famished. Seldom had any sight been more welcome to the shivering trio upon that bleak, inhospitable moor than the homely face and sturdy form of the old Skye pilot. Charles tottered to meet him—no Prince, but a wet, exhausted, discouraged creature. Donald's provisions, together with the certainty of shelter, put fresh heart into him. Mrs Mackenzie of Kildun, a staunch Jacobite, was eager to entertain the royal fugitive until he could leave for the Orkneys. Her house was not far off, and Charles forced his stiffened limbs to drag him thither. Once in comfort, he could even laugh at his plight. Between them, he, O'Sullivan, and O'Neil only possessed six shirts. He took off the dripping one which he wore, and

allowed his companions to wring it out and spread it before the fire to dry. The flames danced over his lean bare arms and thin muscular throat and chest. O'Neil gently gathered the long, damp hair and twisted it to extract the moisture. 'My poor Morison,' the Prince remarked suddenly. 'If he could see me now!' His Scots valet had been one of his most ardent admirers, and delighted to add lustre to his royalty by cunning dressing.

The others looked at him, and with a blind, instinctive movement of protection gathered nearer. Each had remembered abruptly that thirty thousand pounds was set upon that shining head, now so sadly damp and bedraggled.

The day was breaking fast, but Charles refused to take much-needed rest. He urged Donald MacLeod to return to Stornoway and make all in readiness for his departure. He might doze in an arm-chair, but go to bed he should and would not. Donald obediently plodded back to the little town, puzzling as he entered at an unwonted stir and bustle. The inhabitants, men and women, stood about in chattering, gesticulating groups. He heard the roll of a drum, and saw at least two hundred of Lord Seaforth's Mackenzies, fully armed, drawn up before the door of the chief inn. MacLeod gnawed his under-lip. What did all this upheaval mean? Yesterday the town was quiet and peaceable. Did it bode some harm to the Prince? He walked fearlessly into the principal room of the inn.

A knot of men, apparently self-appointed officers under Lord Seaforth, who owned the island, turned

scowling faces towards him. In answer to his inquiry as to the cause of the uproar, a storm of abuse assailed him. It was his doing. He had brought this ill upon them. The bewildered Donald demanded what they meant. Why, the coming of Prince Charles! was the fierce retort. They were well assured that he was already upon Lewis, and not far from Stornoway, with five hundred men. The inhabitants were exposed to the hazard of losing both their cattle and their lives, as they heard that the Prince was come with full resolution to force a vessel from Stornoway.

Donald could have laughed at the contrast between this war-like picture and the reality. Aloud, he inquired gravely how such a notion had entered their heads. 'Where, I pray you,' he demanded, 'could the Prince in his present condition get five hundred or one hundred men together? I believe the men are mad. Has the devil possessed you altogether?'

The reply confirmed a haunting dread which had visited him since learning of the visit of the spy who purported to come from Clanranald. Mr Macaulay had written to his father, who was minister of Harris, and he had passed on the news of the Prince's projected movements to another minister, whose parish lay south of Stornoway, requesting him to arrange with Lord Seaforth's factor for the arrest of the Prince immediately he landed on Lewis.

Frankness seemed the only possible thing. Donald, fronting the angry men, spoke simply. Having relieved his feelings by describing these informers in strong terms, he added, 'Well, then, since you know already that the Prince is upon

your island, I acknowledge the truth of it, but then he is so far from having any number of men with him that he has only two companions, and when I am there I make the third.' He stepped nearer, ending fearlessly, 'And let me tell you further, gentlemen, if Seaforth himself were here, by God! he durst not put a hand to the Prince's breast.'

His honest wrath cowed them. They muttered sullenly that they had no intention of doing the Prince any hurt. They did not desire to meddle with him, but they were determined that he should not enter the town, and must leave Stornoway for the mainland, or anywhere that he should think convenient. Donald, the more that the wind was right for this latter course, agreed. A fresh check was the refusal to allow him a pilot, and the unexpected decision of the crew and captain not to sail with him in the brig which he had chartered. Growing desperate, he offered any sum, but the public panic was so great that five hundred pounds would have been an insufficient bribe. To make matters worse, two, out of the six boatmen whom they had brought with them, had become infected with the general alarm, and quietly vanished.

Donald returned discomfited with this tale of woe. He found the Prince drowsy over a fire, but the ill tidings soon aroused him. He flew into one of those unrestrained rages which his chiefs and counsellors had learned to dread, storming with mingled anger and fear. When he had calmed a little, the party discussed what was best to be done. They were four in number besides the Prince, and had six men to act as rowers. Ned Burke proposed that they should all take to

the mountains. Charles smiled and laid a hand on Ned's shoulder. 'Nay, dear; since when have you turned coward? I shall be sure of the best of them ere taken, which I hope shall never be in life.'

His momentary fire and animation died. He dropped back again into his seat, declaring half-petulantly that be the consequences what they might, he could not think of stirring till he should have had some sleep. He was worn out after his journey over moor and bog, and his associates were in little better plight. They called Mrs Mackenzie into consultation and, after much anxious discussion, it was decided to leave the following morning and return to Benbecula. His hostess promised to procure a boat in which they could cross Loch Stornoway, a short-cut to Scalpa. The good lady, Jacobite and Catholic, refused even thanks for her hospitality. Charles pressed payment upon her for a quey that they had killed. She declined the money until Donald MacLeod forced it upon her, declaring that deil a man or woman should say the Prince ate their meat for nought. Charles smiled, and added a kiss as further fee.

He still looked haggard and worn, less with hardships than with disappointment and anxiety, when the travellers set out again next day. The project had been to call at Scalpa, but ere they were a league at sea the distant sight of ships of war forced them to land on the island of Euirn. It was a barren, desolate spot, the more dreary for the strong gale sweeping over it. Fishers used it to spread out and dry their catches, some of which the fugitives found upon



the rocks, but the place was uninhabited. The only shelter offering itself was a low, pitiful hut, the roof of which leaked so badly that a sail required to be draped over it to keep out the rain. For provisions the party had some portions of the cow bought from Mrs Mackenzie, as well as meal, brandy, and sugar. A rough earthen pitcher was discovered, left behind by the fishermen, in which a crude punch used to be brewed. The second night it was accidentally broken, but the Prince refused to be downcast. 'We can as well drink the brandy cold,' he decided.

His look would grow dreamy as he gave them a toast at their humble repasts, eaten round a rock, while seated on the bare ground. 'The Black Eye, gentlemen!' he used to cry gaily. Before his vision there danced a face, the second daughter of the King of France. In imagination he saw himself wedded to her—her father, Louis of the elusive promises, fitting out a large expedition for his son-in-law to head, triumph, victory, the throne of Great Britain, shared with Madame Adelaide. . . . The wind blew through the rents in his weather-stained clothing, and he looked down at his hands, blistered and marred by the rough cookery at which he had become an expert. Far, very far, the gay, empty-headed court of Versailles and a Bourbon princess's painted prettiness. He was hiding from his enemies in this desert place, a price upon his head, ragged shoes upon his feet—behind him the blood-stained glamour of his brief victories; before him danger, hardship, capture, and then . . . 'The Tower? the block? Nay, they would not dare. Rather a fortress, years of

captivity, till the world heard that the Young Pretender was dead. They would have their secret way—poison, a dirk thrust. Better to perish of privations than to fall into their hands.’

He shivered violently. It was cold and bleak for May, and his foes were numberless.

These black moods came upon him seldom. He was young, unimaginative, with a superbly healthy body, and a mind which refused to foresee difficulty or danger. This wild, adventurous life appealed to him. He was free from the trammels of a court, from the cavil and criticism that had met him from many quarters throughout his mad expedition. The men now with him worshipped him, regarding his lightest word as something to be treasured and obeyed. He laughed at their efforts to keep up his ‘port,’ as MacLeod expressed it. The boatmen must not eat at the same rock as served the Prince for table. ‘Set them up!’ snorted old Donald. He was as much king here—king of these wild Highland hearts—as if he reigned in St James’s. Despite bad weather, lurking danger, the future’s menace and uncertainty, the inward chill that gripped even his strong frame, Charles was happy. That happiness found vent in song and jest, gay talk, a keen enjoyment of the rough, wild life, a cheerful putting-up with makeshifts and inconveniences. He was the most regretful of any to leave Euirn after four days. A high sense of honour made him wishful to place a sum of money on a rock sufficient to pay for the fish which they had found and eaten. Donald MacLeod refused to permit any such dangerous trace of the Prince’s stay on Euirn.

Charles yielded unwillingly, and was still arguing vociferously when he was pushed into the boat.

Disappointment awaited them at Scalpa. Donald Cameron, fearful of Hanoverian vengeance for his act of simple hospitality to the supposedly shipwrecked strangers the previous week, had found it advisable to go into hiding. The Prince reluctantly agreed that it might be safer not to land, and the voyage was accordingly continued towards Benbecula. There was a dead calm, which meant hard rowing, until dawn, when a strong breeze sprang up. The voyagers rejoiced at first, but soon perceived with dismay that the wind was equally favourable to a ship in full sail, obviously coming in pursuit. Charles was urgent for speed, asseverating vehemently, 'If we escape this danger, you shall have a handsome reward; if not, I'll be sunk rather than taken.' Not until the late afternoon of the next day, following upon hours of terror and suspense, as more than one enemy ship sighted their craft and made after it, did they succeed in baffling their pursuers and landing upon another bleak island. After a night at sea, with oatmeal soaked in salt water as their only refreshment, hunger stalked at their heels. The Prince had swallowed down the disgusting paste with cheery words, vowing that if he mounted his throne he should not fail to remember those who dined with him then. His escape so elated him that he boasted of his belief that he was not meant to die by water or any weapon. His plight was dismal, as it was impossible to light a fire lest the smoke

should draw attention to their presence. Rain began to fall in torrents, the wind veered, and soon a violent gale swept the sodden ground. Charles, unheeding, was joyously trying his skill at catching the large crabs which the boatmen had discovered about the rocks. He refused to let himself be relieved of a full bucket, and carried it happily for several miles. A grass-keeper's bothy had been sighted, promising some shelter. Charles laughed helplessly as the rest stood by for him to enter. The low doorway was only possible of negotiation by creeping on hands and knees. They put heather under his, and the long body that was worth thirty thousand pounds, dead or alive, crawled obediently into the poor abode.

Old Clanranald came to him at Benbecula the following day. The Prince's appearance so appalled him that he could hardly wait in his anxiety to supply Charles with shirts, shoes, and provisions. The Prince was ragged, dirty, but indubitably royal. Clanranald listened with grave satisfaction to Charles's assurances of his belief in the chief's fidelity, and told him that he had nothing to fear. At the same time, he added, His Royal Highness might be safer in Glen Coradale, in South Uist, whither Neil MacEachain was eager to conduct him. Charles had added another to the many ready to protect him at the cost of life and property.

They came to Neil's house, swept and garished by his brother Ranald, at six on a warm May evening. The great mountains of Hekla and Benmore rose towering against a pink sky, seeming in their dark secretiveness to promise a

thousand hiding-places for any fugitive. Down on the shore the tide was creaming in, the air alive with the white wings and shrill voices of sea-birds. Close by was a large cave, where Neil left the Prince while he went to discover if spy or enemy lurked near. He found nobody but Ranald MacEachain, and the Prince was soon conducted, reassured, to his new abode. He expressed himself as graciously pleased with the humble place, 'Especially in comparison with the abominable hole we have just left. I am sure the devil deserted it because he had not enough room in it. What a pity that Mr MacDonald is not here to rebuke me for mentioning the devil so flippantly.' He laughed.

The little house, for all its comparative commodiousness, was unfurnished. They made the Prince a seat of green turf, on which he sat outside the door, smoking—a habit learned in Scotland, and much indulged in during his wanderings—and watching the tide turn and go out. For supper he feasted upon bread-and-cheese and goat's milk. Afterwards Burke knelt and washed the sore, weary feet, performing his task as gently as any woman. He, who had slept in Holyrood, under a king's canopy, flung himself down thankfully on a bed of heather and green rushes, sleeping soundly until the sun wakened him at noon next day.

For three weeks Charles enjoyed comparative comfort and immunity from danger. Clanranald supplied him with linen and provisions. He suggested bringing sheets, but the Prince, laughing, showed him his plaid, declaring that he was a



Highlander and carried all his bed-clothes about with him. Friends and adherents visited him secretly. He had abundance of shooting and fishing. A hundred people round Coradale knew of his presence, but word never passed their lips, although thirty thousand pounds was the reward for so doing. Neither conscience nor imagination being active, Charles paid little heed to affairs in Scotland other than his own. Great houses might be burned, humble cots and sheilings pay with their destruction for having sent their sons to fight for him, but the Prince, hearing vaguely of such disasters, and seeing none of them, dismissed them lightly. 'I will build others to replace these, when I reign,' he would boast frequently. Even the return, empty-handed, of Donald MacLeod, whom he had dispatched to the mainland with a demand for money from Murray of Broughton and Lochiel, failed to depress him.

There had been an abortive attempt to carry on the war, concerted between the heads of some of the principal clans, at Muirlaggan on May 8th. Lochiel, rescued sorely wounded, had been carried from the fated battle-ground by his Camerons, and was anxious to organise the remaining forces afresh. As before, secret treachery undermined the scheme. Lord Lovat played them false. Clanranald and Lochgarry did not succeed in raising anything like the required number of their men. Barisdale's double-dealing eventually sent him to a French prison. Finally, the leaders dispersed, and a number of prominent figures from the ill-starred rising made their escape to France on two ships which, too late to aid Charles, brought him forty thousand *louis d'or* to Borra-

dale. Amongst them were Sir Thomas Sheridan, Hay of Restalrig, Maxwell of Kirkconnell, Lord Elcho, Lord John Drummond, and the Duke of Perth. He had rallied amazingly, but after a few days at sea, the end, foretold, came about. The gold, landed in casks, was carried ashore and buried. Lochiel, loyal to his clan, refused to go with the rest and desert his stricken children. Murray, for motives that will never be understood, elected to remain likewise. Charles pouted a little over the secretary's statement to Donald that he was in no position to supply his Prince with money. What of the French gold? Then his brow cleared, and he declared that it was no matter. Murray would never play him false. He was one of the honestest, firmest men in the whole world. He was further cheered by the brandy which Donald had managed to buy for him at an extortionate price. There were letters as well, from Lochiel and Murray, telling the Prince how his affairs went. Charles frowned as he read, for his army was dispersed, the clans delivering up their arms or surrendering their persons, while the sternest and most merciless measures were being taken everywhere for stamping out the insurrection. Hardest of all to endure were Lord George Murray's strictures, contained in the letter written to the Prince the day following Culloden. That it was weeks old did not render its contents the more palatable to the proud creature.

Neil MacEachain had grown very deep into his confidence. The grave young Highlander had been educated much abroad, with a view to his entering the priesthood. The project fell through,

but Neil's knowledge of foreign languages, his gentleness and refinement, made him an acceptable companion. As they walked the beach together, or sat in the boat lythe-fishing, Charles would talk incessantly of the past months of warfare. He never mentioned Lord George Murray's name without bitterness or blame. The royal memory was elastic and convenient. The actual events of that grey day at Culloden had grown foggy and indistinct. Charles no longer remembered Lochiel's disapproval of fighting, or his own stubborn insistence upon battle on unsuitable ground. 'The morning before the action I used all my rhetoric and eloquence against fighting,' he told Neil passionately, 'yet my Lord George out-reasoned me, till at last I yielded for fear to raise a dissension among the army.' His long, sunburned hands clenched. 'I attribute it all—defeat, failure—to Lord George's infidelity, roguery, and treachery,' he declared vehemently.

Neil smiled, and changed the topic to the conduct of the MacDonalds on the field. Charles managed another stab at the unfortunate Lord George, declaring that it was his insistence upon having the right wing for 'his accursed Athol men' that had caused the MacDonalds' delay in charging. Suddenly he realised that he was talking to a MacDonald. 'They were the last that abandoned the field,' he added quickly, 'and moreover, they would certainly have been cut to pieces had not the picquets come to their relief.'

Charles's gracious tact stood him in good stead when he talked to these Highlanders, each fiercely loyal to his chief, and linked by innumerable connections to other clans. One hot day, as they

rowed up and down Loch Boisdale, Donald MacLeod at the oars, the Prince supposedly steering, but oftener dabbling idly in the deep peacock-blue of the water, Donald spoke of Sir Alexander MacDonald and MacLeod of MacLeod. 'When your Majesty comes to your own, what would you do with these men, sir?' the old Skye man inquired.

Charles flicked drops of water up into the clear air. His laugh sounded embarrassed. 'Oh, Donald, what would you have me to do with them? Are they not our own people still, let them do what they will? It is not their fault for what they have done. It is altogether owing to the power that President Forbes had over their judgment in these matters. Besides, if the King were restored, we would be as sure of them for friends as any other men whatsoever.'

Donald shook his head. 'I would hope so, sir.'

'I blame the young Laird of MacLeod much more than the father.' The Prince's eyes flashed suddenly. 'He was presented to me in France, where he kissed my hands and solemnly promised me all the service that lay in his power to promote my Cause, but when put to the trial he did not keep his word at all.' Charles's look grew brooding.

He was a strange mixture, this Prince who had won so many hearts. Sometimes his merriment found vent in dancing for an hour, to no other accompaniment than his own gay whistling. The least intelligence favourable to him or his affairs sent his spirits soaring. He never stopped to inquire into the truth or likelihood of the rumour. He always insisted that the Highlanders were

still harassing the enemy, and a wild tale of a minor skirmish in Badenoch between Cluny's MacPhersons and some Hanoverian soldiers delighted him. A similar story that MacDonald of Barisdale was at Glen Quoich, heading three thousand men, enraptured him. He taught himself to believe that a French landing would still come, if it had not already taken place. 'I am firmly persuaded that my brother Henry must be by this time in England, at the head of ten thousand men. Louis would not dare to dispatch less,' he would say. When news was scanty or discouraging, and even his unconquerable optimism showed signs of inanition, he used to watch the distant sails that passed every day up and down the channel, insisting that they must be French vessels. In reality these were British men-of-war, guarding the coast, a fact which before long necessitated further wanderings and privations.

MacDonald of Boisdale shared his brother Clanranald's caution. He it was who, when summoned by the Prince upon his first landing at Eriska nearly eleven months before, had curtly refused his assistance, and influenced Clanranald to do the same. In Charles's present strait, although Boisdale shook his head, murmuring that he had prophesied as much, he did not act so determinedly. At first he kept from personal contact with the Prince, but allowing Neil MacEachain to act as go-between and emissary, agreed to aid Charles to escape. A ship to take him out of the country was urgently necessary, if indeed the enemy, hemming him in on all sides, could be eluded.



Boisdale, a mingling of curiosity and compassion overcoming his caution, decided to risk a visit. As he neared the little house, he heard, through the thick sea-mist enshrouding its immediate surroundings, a gay foreign voice, mingled with harsher, homelier accents. Charles was entertaining a party of gentlemen from the country, who had arrived the day before and been persuaded to remain. With his fatal facility for thrusting alarms and disagreeables into the background, he was thoroughly enjoying himself, playing the host. On seeing a stranger, he fled into the house, but hurried explanations in French from O'Sullivan promptly brought him out again. He ran to meet Boisdale with extended arms. 'I am heartily glad to see the face of an honest man in such a remote corner,' he cried. Boisdale gulped. He remembered the slim figure pacing the sand with him, eager, entreating. The Prince was now sunburned, thin; face, hands, and shirt decorated with soot; his long legs—scratched, scarred, stockingless—appearing out of a ragged kilt. He dragged Boisdale indoors, demanded brandy, and started a fresh carouse. Boisdale's attempts to warn him were brushed aside by an airy wave of the hand. It was but seldom that he had friends with whom he could enjoy himself. He would on no account part with them that night. Boisdale murmured that a party had come to Barra in quest of him. Charles demanded what they were. On hearing MacDonalds and MacLeods, he shrugged his shoulders, totally unconcerned. The feast went on, the royalty remaining comparatively sober when the rest were helpless.

The return of Neil cast the first shadow. He was able to go about the country unmolested and gather news. Charles, who always made a practice of learning from him in private what information he had brought, left his somnolent guests and came outside. Neil's tidings dashed his gay spirits. Two hundred of the Skye militia, sent by Lord Loudoun, had landed on Barra. The rumour of the Prince being in the Hebrides had gained credence. Barra proving a blank, South Uist was to be combed for him. The coasts and fords of Benbecula were guarded. Captain Ferguson—a name already a byword for his savage cruelty, especially to the Jacobites—was ordered to Lewis; another officer to Harris; while two warships were to cruise along the coast of Uist. The nets seemed to be closing round Charles. His gaiety and careless certainty abandoned him. He must leave Coradale immediately, he declared. That night he sailed to Ouia.

Days of dread, distress, and danger followed. The Prince learned what it meant to be hunted like a wild beast, his safety equally menaced on sea and land. Three days' unrest and apprehension upon the island culminated in another hasty departure. The little company divided. The Prince, forlornly hugging two shirts under his arm, went with O'Neil and a guide for his sole companions by land to Rossinish, in the north-east corner of Benbecula.

Here he received a visit from Lady Clanranald, who was to prove her loyalty afresh in a short while. She brought him linen and brandy, both sorely required by the fugitives. Hers was the

first woman's face that Charles had seen since parting from his hostess at Kildun House. For a little he shed his royalty and his fears. She carried away a picture of two sun-stained young hands clasping hers, a thin cheek stooped for her to salute, the Prince's husky words of grateful acknowledgment of her service and her care ringing in her ears. 'I shall not soon forget the kindness I have met with in this country,' he told her.

O'Neil the Irishman had the defects of his mercurial compatriots. He was moody, easily discouraged, lifted up to great heights, and correspondingly dashed down. The responsibility of being in sole charge of the Prince weighed heavily upon him. He was uneasily conscious, too, that he was out of favour. Charles had dispatched him to Lewis, to endeavour to procure a ship for France. O'Neil had unluckily been recognised by an inhabitant of Stornoway, through his previous visit, and narrowly escaped being made prisoner. Crestfallen and unsuccessful, he returned to the Prince, who, with characteristic selfishness, had never cared much for him since.

They trudged on resolutely—rain, hunger, and danger for company. O'Neil was in one of his black moods. His escape from the enemy at Stornoway had shaken his nerve, and it seemed impossible that here they could avoid falling into the hands of their foes. He grumbled as much to the Prince.

Charles, to whom danger acted as a spur, spoke sternly. 'O'Neil, is this all the faith and trust

you have in God? Let us only take care to have enough of faith and trust in His providence, and there is no fear of us at all.' He laughed, the sound echoing eerily in the mist. 'Pull up your spirits, man. Never despair.'

It was daylight when they came upon a mean cottage. Their sole food for two days had been some mouldy crumbs, discovered in O'Neil's pocket. Charles, his hunger overcoming any idea of danger, hammered on the low, sun-blistered door. A very old woman came blinking to open it. She had only meagre fare for them, two eggs apiece and a portion of bear-bannocks, washed down by spring water, snow-cold. Charles devoured the homely eatables, watched by shrewd, motherly eyes. Suddenly the wrinkled, brown face cleared. 'Lasses went to milk the goats away yonder.' She pointed vaguely. 'Ye might get a drink o' milk frae them.'

'Where?' demanded Charles eagerly.

'Cross yon burn and owre the brae.'

They set off, the Prince so much refreshed that he negotiated the hill in a series of skips which left O'Neil toiling and groaning behind. He overtook Charles finally, the centre of a circle of brown-cheeked, bare-armed girls. His face was buried in a rough vessel containing the strong-tasting milk. O'Neil lay down, collapsed with fatigue and fear, on the grass, warm and prickly with the June sun. Charles argued and jested, to no purpose. At last he turned to the girls with a laughing suggestion. 'Come, my lasses, what would you think to dance a Highland reel with me? We cannot have a bagpipe just now, but I shall sing you a Strathspey reel.'

They gathered about him, eager and giggling. The Prince, light-footed, went through the intricate steps as if the rough ground had been a ball-room floor. As he cracked his thumbs and clapped his hands, O'Neil wondered, with a burning sense of shame for his own faint-spiritedness, if he thought of other dancing—the gay measures at Holyrood, the balls at Inverness, given in a last defiance of fate. Afterwards, as Charles lay panting in the grass, breathless and sobered, O'Neil crept to his side directly the girls had gone. 'I am ashamed to remain so doleful, sir, when you have been at so much pains to divert my melancholy. There could have been no dancing at your heart,' he whispered.

Charles merely yielded a reddened, soiled hand for O'Neil to kiss. He lay for a long time, his face hidden in the crook of his arm.

Rossinish became unsafe from the prowling militia, whose boats were unpleasantly near. The only chance of escaping them was by sea. At dead of night Donald Macleod and O'Sullivan came in their boat from Ouia, and carried the Prince back towards Coradale. The weather had turned unpropitious, violent wind and rain forcing the swift little craft and its drenched occupants to take shelter at Aikersideallach. The place, a creek in a rock above high tide, was so secretive and deserted that it seemed safe to light a fire. The Prince snatched what sleep he could, his bonnet over his eyes to protect them from the smoke-drift and blown spray. MacDonald of Boisdale being their only hope, it was decided to return to Coradale to seek his advice



and assistance. The ill news met them of his having been taken prisoner, with small hope of release. This was a heavy blow, as Boisdale knew the neighbourhood so intimately that he was invaluable in advising Charles as to the safest places of concealment, and could send messages warning him of enemy movements.

The Prince was distressed, but by no means friendless. Hugh MacDonald of Balshar in North Uist, brother-in-law to Donald Campbell of Scalpa, had been forward with advice and timely suggestions. Charles, listening bewildered to a stream of directions, lamented that he should never remember unless he wrote the whole down. The two had met at a loch-side. The Prince wore a kilt and a very indifferent plaid. His fair skin was nearly black with exposure to the weather, day and night, for he had not slept under a roof since leaving Coradale. He had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours, but Hugh MacDonald found him cheerful and jesting. He devoured eagerly a nauseous repast sent him by another MacDonald, consisting of bread, salt butter, and a roasted hen. Charles ate the hen, washing it down with water from the loch, the which he procured in his bonnet. His stockings were scorched, and half-hanging off the thin, scratched legs. MacDonald inquired the reason. 'I took them off this morning to dry at a heather fire, but as I fell asleep they got burned,' the Prince explained placidly. 'No, no, *mon ami*, I would not for the world accept of your hose. I have another pair.'

For five or six days the Prince lurked about the neighbourhood of Loch Boisdale. There

were constant alarms from the enemy's ships, usually causing a hurried flight to the mountains. Sometimes he hid in their friendly recesses during the daytime, at night sleeping in open fields or on exposed moor, under a hastily improvised tent made out of the oars and sails of his boat. Other nights he spent on the water in the boat itself, and once in an old tower, which at least allowed of their kindling a fire for some rude cookery, while Burke pulled heather for the Prince's bed. He was cold, hungry, wet to the skin, his enemies hemming him in in a relentless circle ; his sole companions the faithful few who shared his hardships and dangers ; his sole hope the unconquerable certainty that he was preserved from destruction to fulfil some destiny of greatness. He would have smiled had he known that it was a woman's wit, a woman's courage, that were to snatch him out of the jaws of his foes. Her name liveth for evermore.

### CHAPTER III.

‘Fie on ambition! fie on myself, that have a sword, and yet am ready to famish! These five days have I hid me in these woods and durst not peep out, for all the country is laid for me; but now I am so hungry that if I might have a lease of my life for a hundred years I could stay no longer.’—SHAKESPEARE.

THERE had been anxious consultations between the fugitives. Once it was proposed to make for the mainland in their little boat, that light, swift-sailing thing, a course which the Prince eagerly supported. ‘I would rather drown than fall into the hands of those profligate fellows which pursue me,’ he declared, with his customary recklessness and vehemence. Another suggestion was to make for Barra, which had already been searched for him, so that it seemed unlikely that the foe would land there a second time. This last proposal was agreed to, but news reaching them through Boisdale’s wife that the dreaded Captain Scott and a detachment of regular troops had landed on Barra from Fort William, their intention being to unite with the Skye militia already in South Uist, sent the Prince’s party to the far side of the loch, thoroughly alarmed at their strait. Reluctant partings followed with O’Sullivan, MacLeod, and Burke.

The farewell to Burke almost broke both down. The servant was a rough, uncouth creature, but

nothing could exceed his devoted care. In a measure he had taken Sheridan's place with Charles. He was always the one to cut tough reeds or pull heather to make a bed for the Prince when every other shift was lacking. In Burke's society Charles laid aside his royalty, exchanging chaff and jest as with an equal. It was Burke who comforted and cosseted a Prince miserable with toothache, Burke who never grumbled, if the patience and fortitude of others showed signs of failing. The one example of his own pluck giving way had been turned in an instant to bitter self-reproach. Burke had ruefully contemplated the tattered remains of his brogues, lamenting that he would soon have to go without any. Charles, with a laugh, held up one long, slim foot, remnants of leather adhering to the upper part, but the sole calloused and bare. 'Ned, look at me!' Burke was appalled, struck dumb with remorse. If his Prince could undergo such discomfort cheerfully, what was he to dare to murmur? 'Oh, my dear, I have no more to say,' he sobbed. 'You have stopped my mouth indeed.'

The ex-quartermaster-general was left under a rock, with the major portion of the Prince's baggage. Charles shrugged his shoulders ruefully at this compulsory separation from his attenuated belongings. '*Hélas!* my French finery abandoned at Culloden House, and my hunting equipage, brought from France, and left behind on the field. You remember it, gentlemen? One can bear to lose one's poor goods—they may be replaced—but dear friends, never.'

He embraced O'Sullivan, who was bawling

unrestrainedly. Honest Donald, the tears running down his cheeks, tore himself from the clinging arms. Rank and royalty were forgotten. He only knew that his Prince was leaving him, to pass from danger to greater danger, that the weeks of hardship had merely linked them closer together, that he might never see the beloved young face again. Charles forced a draft of sixty pistoles upon him, to be paid by Hay of Restalrig, and gave the boatmen ample remuneration for their services. 'We go by different roads, but please God we shall meet again,' the Prince whispered.

Different roads, alas! for their ways in life lay far apart hereafter. Yet the Land that is very far off has green resting-places for those faithful, loyal souls whose only fault was too deep a devotion to a broken Cause and a weak Prince. In the light where all things shall be made clear, those who served joyously, taking no thought of self, shall surely see the reward of their labours, and the greater glory recompense the earthly service.

Captain Felix O'Neil, somewhat ragged as to attire, very earnest as to manner, sat upon a rock, pouring out with all the enthusiasm and eloquence of which his Irish nature was capable a stream of appeal and persuasion. The lady addressed said No, and, moreover, said it with such unmistakable decision that, although she was not refusing his proposals of marriage, O'Neil looked extremely downcast.

Miss Flora MacDonald was small, with smoothly-braided hair and hazel eyes. The said eyes had a disconcerting trick of looking very straight,



searchingly, almost disapprovingly, at the other person. They looked at Captain O'Neil now. He wriggled, but recommenced his arguments.

'I am afraid.' Miss MacDonald made the statement calmly.

'Of what, madam?'

'The hazards, the dangers.' She spoke gravely. 'You ask very much, sir. You wish me to convey the Prince, dressed as a woman and pretending to be my maid, to Skye, or some other safe place. Do you not realise'—she blushed—'the risk that I should run in a malicious and ill-natured world of losing my character by such an action?'

O'Neil stood up with flashing eyes. 'You need not fear your character, madam, for by this you will gain yourself an immortal character. But if you still entertain fears about your character, I shall, by——'

Miss MacDonald rose also. 'Pray moderate your language, sir. I am unaccustomed to such terms. If this is Court talk!' She allowed the snub time to sink in, and added: 'You will——?'

'Marry you directly, if you please!' shouted O'Neil.

He fell upon his knees. He looked so ragged and ridiculous that Flora was thankful that nobody except a few sheep had overheard or witnessed his offer. Coldly she bade him rise. 'I am so very far from having any mind to accept your addresses, sir, that if I undertake being guardian to the Prince, I could not likewise have you with us.' Her tone was firm, unrelenting.

O'Neil wrung his hands. 'You will at least save the Prince?'

Flora nodded, a little smile about her lips.

‘Then—then’—O’Neil flung himself on his knees again—‘I pray you to consider my case, and the desire I have to share in the Prince’s fate, whatever it shall be. I beg you to consent.’

Under the gimlet persuasion of those hazel eyes he scrambled up and resumed his hard seat. Flora, with admirable and exasperating common-sense, pointed out that the safety of the Prince depended upon few being in company with him. ‘I can more easily undertake the preservation of one, than of two or more.’ O’Neil commenced to argue and entreat afresh. A lifted hand stopped him. ‘Sir, I desire that you will not insist upon the point, for if you should, I am resolved not to embark upon the affair at all.’

The threat silenced him.

The Prince’s position was indeed desperate before O’Neil was forced to hit upon a mad expedient such as he had proposed to Flora MacDonald. In his roamings about the island on Charles’s behalf, O’Neil had become acquainted with the plain, sensible young woman and her brother Milton. Flora’s sympathies were presumably Hanoverian, as she was a Clanranald MacDonald, but as a girl in her twenties the tale of Charles’s wanderings and perils seemed likely to enlist her pity and help. She might argue calmly, as she did, that he had only brought his misfortunes upon himself, but her sternness was mainly on the surface. O’Neil had conceived the scheme for Charles’s rescue, the lady had agreed to co-operate in it; there only remained the moment for putting it into execution. It is to be feared that she had the connivance and approval of her step-father, a captain of the Skye

militia, otherwise a passport for herself and her supposed maid had been a harder thing to come by. They must all act speedily, O'Neil urged, for the dreaded Captain Carolina Scott had landed within a mile of the Prince's hiding-place.

Charles had now no one with him except O'Neil and Neil MacEachain. The forlorn trio set off to climb a high hill on the north side of Loch Boisdale. The sunken miles of South Uist could be seen from this eminence, and a cave, to which access was obtainable only by scrambling along a narrow ledge, gave them shelter. The slow day went by, long and light, until a red sunset began to paint its passionate colours across the sky's wall.

The Prince stood up. He looked a thin, starved, weather-stained creature, but something of the magic of his royalty, his personality, hung about him still. He smiled into Neil MacEachain's eyes, and his voice shook as he spoke. 'Neil, I entrust myself in your hands, and my life and safety depend upon you.'

Neil gazed long and gravely at him. 'The charge is more than what my life is worth, sir; but yet, with God's assistance, I will find means to preserve you from all danger till everything is got ready to leave the country.'

They shared a meagre meal of bread and cheese before they started out. The few possessions left to them were divided, the Prince carrying his own shirts without demur or complaint. O'Neil took his scanty supply of linen, while the provisions, country fare, and their remaining arms fell to Neil. The three went in silence, Charles

the most cheerful. With his infuriating optimism, he saw beyond the night's difficulties and dangers. He promised recklessly that if they had the good fortune to win out of their present troubles he would give Neil ease and luxury for the rest of his life. The grave young Highlander smiled.

It was the night of the full moon. She rose out of her couch of cloud and spread splendid light over the scenery for miles around. Along the western fringe of South Uist ran a green strip of pasture-land, beyond it a flat belt of white levelled sand, with the wild, dark waters of the Atlantic tossing—a strange contrast to the innumerable placid lochs. Every object, every inch was discernible, distinct. The three figures, like black dots, the sheiling huts near where the cattle grazed, the rocks, the immensity of ocean—nothing was hid from that eye of night. The little house where Flora MacDonald happened to be staying, not far from her brother's farm, opened its door to Neil's cautious knock. In the moonlight, the warm summer night breathing round them, these two, whose meeting has inspired poet, painter, historian, and romanticist, came face to face.

Charles saw a small, determined-looking young woman, quietly aware of the perils of the task so calmly and courageously undertaken. Flora saw a ragged, ill-clad, long-limbed young man, his skin darkened to a gipsy's hue by sun and rain, the marks of hunger, hardship, and fatigue stamped upon features that might have been called handsome were he in his accustomed state and surroundings. He stood at her door like any pedlar, his humble bundle upon his back. She curtsied.

but he would not let her kiss his hand. 'We are not in Holyrood,' he told her jestingly. They shook hands instead. The clasp of hers was firm and warm for all her fingers' smallness.

'And your plan, madam?' He hid his eagerness under a cloak of apparent indifference, as threadbare as the plaid enwrapping him.

'I design to go to Benbecula as soon as possible, sir, to consult with my step-father and the Lady Clanranald. I will get everything in readiness, and send back word next day how matters are going.'

Charles nodded quickly. 'Yes, yes. And meantime, we shall await you—where?'

'At Coradale, sir?' The suggestion was Neil's.

Charles, eagerly drinking out of a bowl of cream, thoughtfully produced by Miss MacDonald, lifted his face from the vessel to acquiesce.

Sunrise saw the fugitives under a rock on the side of a hill three miles from Coradale. Charles, despite the cream, complained of hunger. Had Neil anything to eat? He gazed at him expectantly, and when bread and cheese, also from Flora's store, were provided, devoured the plain fare with alacrity. He then curled up and fell into a dreamless sleep. Neil and O'Neil took turns to act as sentry over him, glad that he did not wake until late. The day dragged by. He was fretting and impatient most of the afternoon, grudging the long hours of enforced inaction, unreasonably eager to hear from Flora. Neil left him with O'Neil while he went to buy provisions. When he returned, the sun had gone down, and the chill which follows in its wake had



come on the air. Charles, huddled close to O'Neil for warmth, sat up and asked Neil what he had brought in the way of food. Neil displayed some fresh butter and cheese, and a few bottles of brandy. 'Come, come,' urged the Prince, 'give me one of the bottles and a piece of the bread, for I was never so hungry since I was born.' He ate enough for three ordinary meals, and drank the healths of James and Henry in the good brandy. Afterwards he slept, wrapped in his plaid.

The long twilight was deepening to a misty purple. The Prince awoke, shivering, and sat up. The world was grey, starless. He moved to and fro, impatiently, irritably, finally summoning Neil. 'We shall not hear any word to-night, I fear.' He frowned. 'Neil, you are to go to Benbecula and discover what is toward.'

O'Neil, who knew that the errand would mean a walk of some thirteen miles, ventured on a faint remonstrance. The Prince's eyes flashed. 'What, sir! Do you dare to question my commands? Am I not to be obeyed even in these wilds?' He turned to MacEachain. 'Go at once, Neil, and be back next day at four in the afternoon, under pain of gaining my displeasure for ever.'

The threat did not require to be put into execution. Before the hour appointed, Neil, footsore but indomitable, reappeared. The Prince, who was lying under the rock with his head in O'Neil's lap, started up when he saw him, and ran forward. He took Neil's hand, holding it tightly, as he demanded the news of Miss MacDonald. Neil replied that all was well, and they were to meet her at Rossinish without loss of time.

Charles hustled his companions ruthlessly. 'Be quick! be quick! How slow you have been, Neil! It must be three o'clock, by the sun.'

'I was detained, sir.'

'Detained? *Comment?*'

'At the fords, sir, which separate Benbecula from South Uist. They are guarded by the Skye militia, who have placed sentries within a gun-shot of each other from east to west. As I had no pass I was kept prisoner till next morning. At low tide I was sent to the captain on the other side, who fortunately proved to be Armadale, Miss MacDonald's step-father.'

'And she? Miss MacDonald?' Charles had scant thought to spare for Neil's fatigues and escapes.

'She also had been stopped, sir, having no pass either. I found her at breakfast with her step-father and other gentlemen, and, when we had opportunity for private speech, she told me that it had been put out of her power to go the length of the Lady Clanranald, but that she was going off within half an hour to consult with her. They will carry to Rossinish what clothes and provisions are requisite for the voyage.'

The Prince's long hands clenched. 'If the fords are guarded we cannot reach Rossinish by land.'

The difficulty seemed insuperable, but the powers which watched over Charles Edward did not desert him now. A country boat was procured and took the three across the loch. Rain was falling in steady sheets when they landed on a dour, bleak tidal island. The Prince sat down on a rock and fell asleep, an example promptly

copied by O'Neil, while the patient Neil paid and dismissed the boatmen, and then set off exploring. A few yards away the tide was coming in between the wayfarers and the rest of the land, cutting off the part of the island where they had taken refuge. The Prince, wakened and informed of this, saw his plans thwarted, his safety menaced, his life in actual peril. He ran like a mad thing to the waves tumbling in in green folds. They stopped his further progress, whereupon he turned to Neil with a torrent of abuse. It was his fault, he stormed, and those accursed boatmen's. They had landed him upon this desert island designedly, that he might starve with cold and hunger. He stood in the drenching rain, a wild, absurd figure, gesticulating in his foreign fashion. He refused to listen to any explanations. Neil resignedly offered to swim the strait and fetch a boat. Charles hailed the proposal with enthusiasm, and stood over Neil, urging him, until he began reluctantly to remove his garments. The appearance of a rock in the middle of the water made him beg the Prince to allow him to postpone his bathe. They would very probably be able to walk over dry-shod in a short time.

Charles was ashamed of his panic when the words proved true. Neil and O'Neil found his delight somewhat pathetic, for his plight was anything but desirable. The rain had soaked him to the skin. He was shivering with cold and weak from hunger, having eaten nothing since the previous evening. A cold, spiteful wind blew lashingly over the bare moor, where neither bush nor hill offered any shelter. It was Midsummer Day.

They struggled on for another quarter of a mile, until a couple of sheilings promised a refuge. These were occupied by two of Clanranald's tenants, who knew Neil, and readily accepted the story that his companions were two fugitives from Culloden. A meal was willingly provided, the Prince thankfully creeping into one of the huts on hands and knees. A native agreed to act as guide, directly the wanderers were sufficiently rested and restored to resume their journey. It was nearly five o'clock when they reached the side of a loch three miles from Rossinish. High heather grew about it, their only shelter from the continuing storm.

They dared not set out again until darkness fell. The miserable hours went by, the Prince huddled close to his companions, trembling with cold. They could hear his teeth chattering during a temporary lull in the gale. The night was pitch-black when they started afresh. It was impossible to see more than a few yards ahead, and with the wind in their faces, blowing wild scuds of rain against them, blinding tired eyes, progress was infinitesimal. The road, a mere track, was a mass of bog-holes, deep water-logged ruts, and puddles. Charles, helped along by the other two, had innumerable falls, despite their watchfulness. Again and again a halt required to be made, struggling to stand in the screaming gale, while Neil fished, sometimes shoulder-deep, in a ditch to retrieve a shoe off one of the feet that had tramped to Derby. At length, after a weary journey, about midnight a faint glimmer of light showed them the existence of a house.

Neil, sent on ahead to discover if Lady Clan-

ranald and her companion had arrived, returned with dismal intelligence. Some twenty of the Skye militia had come there two days previously, and were lodged in a tent about a quarter of a mile away. The owner of the house, disturbed from his slumbers, shut the door in Neil's face and went back to bed.

The Prince limped forward to meet Neil, whose advancing figure made a darker blur in the surrounding blackness. 'Well? Well? Have the ladies come? Is all prepared for us?'

Neil, unnerved by fatigue and apprehension, broke the truth baldly. 'The militia are encamped close by, sir. It is unsafe for your Royal Highness to proceed further.'

'Then what are we to do?' cried Charles. His voice was hoarse and weak. 'Where can I run for safety? The enemy seem everywhere.'

A fury of anger shook him from head to foot. He laid violent hands upon his tattered garments as though he would like to rend them in pieces. His rage and despair were pitiable. For hours he had been battling with the elements, buoyed up by the certainty of shelter and temporary safety once they reached Rossinish, and now his hopes were dashed to the ground. If he entered the house, discovery and capture must assuredly follow. If he remained out in such weather, he would only perish from hunger and exposure. His companions, in as sorry a plight as himself, argued feebly, neither having anything practical or helpful to suggest. The Prince stood leaning against Neil, shedding weak tears of disappointment, when the guide, whom all three had momentarily forgotten, spoke in Gaelic.



Charles asked wearily, 'What does he say?'

Neil translated the words rapidly. 'He does not understand our discussion, sir, but he is aware of our difficulty. He tells me that there is one of Clanranald's boomen living not far off, and we may go into his house with safety. Will your Royal Highness venture it?'

'Anywhere,' moaned the Prince.

The house was humble, but seemed Paradise after the hours of rain and wind spent trudging and stumbling through dark and bog. They could even afford to laugh at each other's plight when daylight revealed the ravages wrought by mud and wet. The food provided was eagerly devoured, and somewhat rested and restored, Charles ordered that Neil should go to Nunton, Clanranald's residence, in quest of Miss MacDonald. Neil was reluctant to leave him alone with the Irishman, who was an utter stranger to the country. In case of alarm or danger O'Neil would not know where to hurry the Prince. In the end O'Neil was the one dispatched on the errand, his alacrity amusing Charles. Miss MacDonald's contemptuous dismissal of his suit had quickened O'Neil's ardour. He might find the lady in a more complaisant mood to-day.

The light strengthened. The weary Prince, nodding in a chair, was roused gently by Neil. The booman's wife had warned him that it would be wiser to leave the house for the present. The militia came about daybreak to buy milk, and if the Prince were seen he might be recognised. Neil, alarmed, conveyed the yawning, protesting Charles down to the shore, where a rock afforded

deceitful harbour. At intervals the booman dispatched one of his dairymaids to report what was taking place amongst the soldiers.

It was another very wet day. The rock was neither high nor broad enough to shelter Charles from the incessant downpour, and to complete his discomfiture, swarms of midges attacked him. Neil, similarly wet and bitten, had in addition to his own misery to endure Charles's almost hysterical grievances and complaints. Charles's temper and dignity had both collapsed under this succession of aggravations and misfortunes. At intervals Neil wrung out the Prince's soaked plaid, praying for release for them both. The sea, grey, indifferent, received the downpour from the sky which matched its leaden dulness. Great gulls cried about the place, and from the farm drifted homely sounds—a cow lowing, the cluck of fowls, the voice of a maid singing.

After three hours' refined torture their messenger came to report that the militia were gone. The Prince, stiff and groaning, was helped to his feet by Neil, who aided him to hobble back to the house. A roaring peat-fire greeted his gaze. He ran towards it with cries of joy, the dairymaid who had thoughtfully lighted it grinning sympathetically. Neil, regardless of the wet dripping from his own garments, stripped off Charles's soaked clothes. Rubbed dry, he sat in a tattered shirt before the blaze, kicking his toes contentedly in the warmth. Neil, a track of water marking his progress, plodded round, hanging the wet things out on ropes. Charles's spirits soared. He jested and sang, heedless of the brooding dangers of his position. Neil said of him after-

wards that he seemed as merry and happy as if he were in the best room at Whitehall.

After a draught of hot milk, Neil suggested that he should sleep, to make up for the previous night's want of rest. No bed was available. In the end, Neil took down the leaf of the door and spread over it a ragged old sail. Charles curled up on this, covered with his damp plaid. Some hours later he was wakened by the return of the guide, with provisions and a letter from O'Neil. Charles put the missive away after informing Neil that Lady Clanranald and Miss MacDonald were to come unfailingly the next day.

The day crawled by. Part of it was spent on Rueval, watching with anxious, sun-dazzled eyes the flat map of country spread below. Neither word from, nor appearance of, his rescuers came, and by evening Charles was obliged to return to his old quarters, anxious and disappointed. He blamed the two women, who in reality were busy night and day preparing the disguise arranged between them. With daylight two MacDonalds, who were to form part of the crew, arrived. Charles, feverishly anxious to waste no more time, dispatched Neil to Nunton, and went himself with the MacDonalds to the hill where he had watched and waited the day before. Hunger and ennui sent him eventually to the little hut which had sheltered him on the occasion of his arrival on the Long Island. Here he busied himself with cooking supper, roasting the liver and kidneys of a bullock on a wooden spit. The flames danced upon the haggard, weather-beaten young face, and the long arms, bared to the elbows, disfigured with sunburn and midge-bites.

His was neither a princely setting nor a princely occupation. Lady Clanranald—her daughter Peggy, and Flora MacDonald, two small, demure shadows behind her—burst into tears as she entered and saw the son of Stuart kings in such humble surroundings, bent upon a menial task.

Charles, scorched and grimy, stood up to receive his guests. 'It would be as well, perhaps, for all kings if they had to come through such a fiery ordeal as I am now enduring,' he laughed. He pressed blackened fingers against his hot cheeks. 'Madam, I bid you heartily welcome to my palace.'

Charles's zeal in cooking was greater than his abilities or performance. He had scorched or burned most of the meat, but throughout supper loudly defended his success as a chef. He sat between Lady Clanranald and Flora, whose brother Milton, a dark Highlander, waited by the door, sentinel and silent. Neil and O'Neil handed the scanty provisions, and the gurgling laugh of Clanranald's daughter Peggy, a girl in her teens, led the chorus of mirth. 'Ah, but mademoiselle should have eaten my cake.' Charles rolled his eyes at her. 'A most excellent cake, compounded of a cow's brains. It tasted monstrous good, I can assure you'

Peggy giggled hysterically. 'I am certain it did, sir,' she choked.

Meal and merriment were checked by Milton's noiseless entrance. One of Clanranald's herds had brought disquieting information. A large force, under General Campbell, who had already pursued the Prince to St Kilda, was landing within three miles of them. Haste and confusion arose instantly.

The party hurried to the boat, everybody, men and women, carrying anything that they could first snatch up. None dared to breathe freely until they had crossed Loch Uskevagh. It was five in the morning, a chilly day although June, when they landed and finished the interrupted repast. Charles was unwontedly quiet, anticipating with dread and dismay the imminent parting from O'Neil. The Irishman's eyes sought his face again and again. They had been through so much together, and now the last of those who had shared his great enterprise—albeit only the waning—was to be torn from him.

At eight o'clock another messenger came for Lady Clanranald. General Campbell was at her house, and threatening that if the mistress did not return before noon the servants should suffer. The remembrance of the treatment meted out to Boisdale's wife, daughter, and household a few days previously by Captain Scott and his soldiers added to the poor lady's anxiety to hasten back. She took a hurried loyal farewell of the Prince, and kissed Flora affectionately. 'I need not beg of you to be circumspect, my dear,' she whispered agitatedly. 'Your position will be most delicate, alone with His Royal Highness and these other gentlemen. I am thankful that you will have the countenance and protection of our good Neil MacEachain, but even so—if only you had a female attendant!'

Flora, with a demure smile, pointed to the large bundle, the contents of which had cost Lady Clanranald and herself anxious thought and hard work. 'I soon shall have,' she replied dryly.

'They may not fit.' Poor Lady Clanranald



turned with fresh lamentations to her daughter as the pair set off for Nunton. 'I had no idea, merely seeing him once before in bad light, that His Royal Highness was so—so large. He will never pass for a woman, I fear.'

Miss Peggy yielded to renewed giggles. 'I wish you had let me stay and assist Cousin Flora with dressing him, ma'am.'

Her mother failed to see any humour in the situation. It was too grotesque, too extraordinary, almost indelicate. Flora would need all her discretion, all her common-sense.

'The Prince kissed me.' Peggy peacocked proudly ahead. 'It would have been nicer had he not had a beard. What will Cousin Flora do about his beard, mama?'

Lady Clanranald, concocting a plausible tale of a visit to a sick child, by way of accounting for her prolonged absence, only groaned dismally in reply.

## CHAPTER IV.

‘How might we disguise him?’

Alas the day, I know not! There is no woman’s gown big enough for him; otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchief, and so escape. . . .

On my word it will serve him. . . .

Quick, quick! we’ll come dress you straight: put on the gown the while.’

SHAKESPEARE.

‘YOUR Royal Highness is somewhat unreasonable.’ Flora’s tones were faintly exasperated. ‘I have only a passport for myself, my maid, and Neil MacEachain, as attendant on us both. How can I convey Captain O’Neil as well, sir?’

‘I do not know.’ Charles’s mouth was sulky. ‘But unless O’Neil goes with us, I do not accompany you, madam.’

Flora stood dismayed. She was up against the stubborn temper which had wrecked many a council, the rock-like obstinacy that throughout his campaign had refused to allow the Prince to see reason in any emergency or difficulty, much less to display common-sense. She tried fresh arguments. ‘Captain O’Neil’s ignorance of Gaelic is an insuperable obstacle to our plan. It will at once draw attention to him, and if suspicion is aroused——’ She paused. ‘Captain O’Neil, I beg of you to make His Royal Highness see how vital it is to leave you behind.’

O’Neil turned to the Prince. His eyes were

blazing. 'Does it matter what becomes of me, sir, so long as your Royal Highness's person is safe? I will endeavour to rejoin Colonel O'Sullivan, and I may have the happiness of being again with you, once you are immediately escaped out of the jaws of your enemies.'

He was rewarded by a softened look from Flora. That practical young woman, however, had scant time for sentiment, and once O'Neil had dragged himself out of the Prince's hysterical embrace, and vanished from sight with her brother—a taciturn and neutral spectator of the whole argument—she turned to the most important part of the masquerade. Often afterwards Charles was to recall that parting with a wry mouth. Despite O'Neil's sobbing protestations of undying loyalty, he saw further than to link his fortunes again with the waning ones of his Prince. Imprisonment, hardships, release, and obscurity swallowed him up. Charles, conquering several undignified sniffs, contemplated with horror the contents of Miss MacDonald's bundle. A gown of flowered calico, a light-coloured quilted petticoat, a mantle, a cap, shoes and stockings. Unsmilingly Flora bade His Royal Highness attire himself in these.

'*Comment?*' Charles muttered helplessly.

Flora, suppressing a sigh of exasperation, came to the rescue. She dressed the wriggling creature, Lady Clanranald's apprehensions of whose size were fully justified, in the clothes, and regarded her handiwork with grave satisfaction. At a distance the Prince might pass for a woman. She requested him to cover as much of his face as possible, but his strange headgear worried

Charles. He was constantly readjusting it, to a steady accompaniment of subdued bad language.

Meekly he held up a diminutive pistol. 'May I not conceal this under my petticoats, miss, for making some small defence in case of an attack?' he inquired.

Flora was adamant. 'If any person should happen to search us, sir, that pistol would only serve to make a discovery.'

Charles laughed. 'Indeed, miss, if we should meet with any that will go so narrowly to work in searching as what you mean, they will certainly discover me, at any rate.' He added coaxingly: 'At least you will permit the men to carry arms?'

'No arms at all.' Flora shook her head resolutely.

Charles argued, but in the end was obliged to content himself with a short, heavy cudgel. 'With this I design to do my best to knock down any single person that shall attack me.' He flourished it recklessly.

An absurd figure, he shuffled obediently after Flora to where the boat was moored, to be at hand in case of any alarm, and sat down gingerly. The day was wretchedly inclement. Rain increased the chill in the air, necessitating a fire, which was lighted, not without misgiving. Flora's hazel eyes directed towards the sea were the first to descry danger. 'There are wherries coming.' Her low voice did not shake. 'Put out the fire; and it might be advisable ourselves to lie down in the heather. They may not land.'

Mercifully they did not. They passed without stopping, going towards the south. At sunset the little party embarked, Charles stepping deli-

cately, clutching his petticoats. It was a perfect evening, still and windless, with sky and sea like one immense turquoise. The latter was smooth until midnight, when a wind, strong and westerly, sprang up. At first the rowers were glad of its aid, until a thick haar, dense and damp, blotted out all immediate surroundings. Fierce arguments in harsh Gaelic broke out as to whether or not they had lost their course. Eventually it was decided to cease rowing until the atmosphere cleared. Flora, worn out with fatigue, fell asleep, despite heavy rain, but the Prince, wakeful and excited, sent his strong young voice ringing out into the mist. Strains of 'The King shall enjoy his own again' and 'The twenty-ninth of May' mingled with Flora's uneasy doze. He was not wholly selfish and inconsiderate, she decided. Once, when she started up, she found him beside her, his hands spread out to protect her from any chance stumble of one of the boatmen who was rearranging the sail. Lady Clanranald had provided a half-bottle of wine, all that the depredations of the military amongst her stores had left, but the Prince insisted that it should be reserved for Miss MacDonald's possible need. 'If she were to turn faint, or feel nausea from the sea or the cold.' He contemplated her pale, inscrutable face with misgiving. 'Do you think either likely, Neil?'

Sunday morning. Day broke pale and clear, the mist thinning and disappearing before the freshening breeze. The dim outline of the Skye coast could be seen, but with the wind from the north-east, strengthening almost to a gale, it was



hard for the rested rowers to make any headway. Charles urged and encouraged them, offering eagerly to relieve the most wearied, but all were in a plight verging on exhaustion when they landed at last at Waternish. Here an hour's halt and an ample but plain repast, consisting of bread and butter, with fresh water from a spring above the rock sheltering them, restored courage and energy. The wind had suddenly dropped, leaving the sea calm and gentle. The boat was launched once more, and continued her course tranquilly until, on rounding a point, two militia sentries were sighted. One of these ran down as far as he dared till the sea stopped him, ordering the boat to pull in to the shore. The crew merely rowed faster, and were soon out of gun-shot range. The man fired, but his piece misgave. The other sentry could be watched running rapidly towards a small village, doubtless with the intention of informing his officer of what was taking place. Within a few minutes a file of soldiers, fully armed, was seen marching down to where the first sentry still gesticulated and waved his useless weapon.

Charles was apprehensive and excited. 'If you had only allowed the men to bring arms! Then we could have fought it out to the last man, notwithstanding the unequal numbers.' He strained his eyes. 'Ah! there are two boats. Should they launch one we shall assuredly be overtaken.'

'We are more likely to be overturned, unless your Royal Highness sits down.' Flora's calm voice broke in on the quick spate of the Prince's speculations.

The enemy, judging pursuit vain owing to the boat's superior speed, ran along the shore to watch it out of sight. Charles, relieved and delighted, gave vent to reckless prophecy. 'I am certainly not fated to drown, or fall into my enemy's hands,' he boasted.

The Prince fondly imagined that once on Skye soil his troubles would be temporarily ended. In reality, he had seldom been in such acute danger as when he lay in the boat, ruefully watching the receding back of Neil and the disappearing skirts of Miss MacDonald. Both were bound for Mugstot, the house of Sir Alexander MacDonald. Flora had refused to allow the Prince to come with her until she had ascertained whether none but friends were in the vicinity. Sir Alexander had married Lady Margaret Montgomerie, one of the eight beautiful daughters of the Countess of Eglinton. They had waited upon the Prince during the brief weeks of his splendour at Holyrood. 'Her ladyship will be only too eager to do anything in her power to assist your Royal Highness,' Flora told the Prince. 'As for Sir Alexander, he is Jacobite at heart——'

'Hé, the gentleman for whose honour you was so nice, miss, when agreeing to convey me here,' Charles reminded her. Flora had indeed advanced the danger to Sir Alexander MacDonald as one reason for refusing to play her part in the scheme. 'Am I to have the privilege of escorting you the length of his house?'

'By no means, sir. Neil will accompany me. Your Royal Highness must remain in the boat.'

The arrangement did not suit Charles, who nevertheless lay down, more or less docilely. The boatmen were ordered not to stir until the two came back, or sent some word. 'If any should ask you who the person in the boat is, you are to say Miss MacDonald's maid,' Flora added.

Charles sat up, laughing. 'Ah, and tell them to curse me for a lazy jade, for what good am I, since I do not attend my mistress?'

At the house Flora learned that Sir Alexander was absent. He had gone, unwillingly she well knew, to wait upon the victorious and insufferable Cumberland at Fort Augustus. Lady Margaret had for company her husband's kinsman and factor, MacDonald of Kingsburgh, a Mrs MacDonald of Skiebost, and—Flora's face paled as she listened—one Lieutenant MacLeod, son of the man in command of the militia on Skye. Three or four of the lieutenant's men were about the house, and the rest of his force only a short distance off. He was particularly engaged to guard that part of the coast, and to examine every boat which landed, in case of rebels being on board. This last was fearful intelligence.

She turned to Neil. 'Have we conveyed His Royal Highness here only to expose him to a worse peril? We dare not bring him near the house.' She asked impetuously for Lady Margaret's maid, who brought her straight to her mistress's apartments. Lady Margaret was not unprepared to be told that the Prince was in the neighbourhood, as she had been privately advised of Flora's scheme, and had aided Charles

previously by smuggling newspapers and little comforts to him. Nevertheless her face grew ghastly as she learned that he was on the shore, very inadequately disguised, and that she must endeavour to have him conveyed to her house in the unsparing daylight.

‘I will send for Kingsburgh.’ Lady Margaret wrung her hands. ‘He may have some plan to propose.’

‘Then talk with him in the garden.’ Flora smiled. ‘I will engage the enemy in the drawing-room.’

She went down, to sustain her part throughout the trying interview with complete calm. The young lieutenant, fussy and self-important, plied her with innumerable questions as to her comings and goings, to all of which Flora returned adroit and plausible replies. The country was in such a disturbed state, so many soldiers were alarming—a demure glance from hazel eyes causing my young gentleman to puff out his chest—that her step-papa thought it prudent for her to cut short her visit to her brother and return home. ‘My mama, who is far from strong, must not have her health endangered by anxiety on her child’s account.’ Lieutenant MacLeod instantly set her down as a model daughter. ‘I have broken my journey here in order to pay my respects to Lady Margaret, and she presses me to remain, but I think it advisable to proceed home after dining with her.’

‘Well, my dear, I shall be glad of your company.’ Mrs MacDonald of Skiebost cut short the lieutenant’s gallant protests that Miss MacDonald must not hurry away. ‘It’s no

times for a decent body to be abroad. These militia have no manners.' She glared at the lieutenant. 'You'll scarce credit it, miss, but on my arrival yesterday my boat was searched for rebels, and they took me for the Young Pretender, and all but searched my person. You may well turn pale at the thought of such indignity.'

Flora's healthy colour had ebbed, but less for concern at Mrs MacDonald's unpleasant experiences than with apprehension regarding the Prince. The good lady, wife to one John MacDonald of Skiebost, in North Uist, a captain of an independent company, was more or less in the secret. She had brought Lady Margaret a letter, warning her that the Prince would soon be in Skye, seeking her protection. The Prince was in no danger from Mrs MacDonald, but he was so reckless, so impatient. The embargo laid upon the boatmen might not apply to him. If weary of waiting, he was capable of coming to the house in quest of food and Flora. Her brain reeled as she tried to picture what must follow. She was anxious on behalf of Lady Margaret, whose restless entrances and exits were enough to arouse suspicion, and later with Neil, who pilgrimaged between the Prince and the house so incessantly that she trembled lest it should cause remark. She scolded him surreptitiously, in the intervals of keeping up a chatty conversation with the mercifully obtuse and admiring lieutenant.

MacDonald of Kingsburgh, a sturdy, middle-aged Scotsman, paced the prim garden with Lady



Margaret and Neil MacEachain. He shared Flora's calm and coolness, soothing her ladyship's agitation, and concocting schemes for averting the immediate danger. The wisest available seemed to be to send Neil back to the Prince, who was to escort him a mile or more to a spot where Kingsburgh would join them, to take Charles to his own house. He could lodge there for the night, and next day go on to Portree and cross to Raasa. The MacLeods of Raasa might find sanctuary for him.

Once again loyalty—simple, unquestioning—dictated every action. The message to the MacLeods was cheerfully undertaken by Donald Roy MacDonald, a cadet of the house. He and one other had been the only two of Sir Alexander MacDonald's following to go 'out.' Although severely wounded at Culloden, and still suffering greatly from the effects of a musket-ball in his foot, he set off at once on horseback. The lieutenant was too much engrossed with Miss MacDonald to notice the factor's discreet disappearance. Armed with wine and biscuits from Lady Margaret, Kingsburgh started for the place appointed.

Neil found himself received by the Prince literally with open arms. Charles, hungry and bored, listened delightedly to the plans proposed, and was eager to meet Kingsburgh without delay. In order to sustain his assumed character, a light bundle of clothes had been prepared for him to carry. Charles's long strides were somewhat impeded by his petticoats, and finding the bundle inconvenient, he threw it down and walked on.

Neil patiently retrieved it, venturing a protest. Charles tossed his head and had to come to a standstill to repair the damage. Neil handed him the bundle, with a gentle suggestion that he should take it again. The Prince refused petulantly. He had carried it long enough, he declared.

They came to a hill, lifting its humped shoulder against the sky. Charles flung himself down and for a time remained silent. The haggard young face, from which the folds of the hood had fallen back, was pinched and weary. Suddenly he sat up, exclaiming sharply, 'Neil! My case of knives. Did you carry them from the boat?'

Neil had not missed the article until that moment. He answered in the negative. 'Then you must return and look for them,' ordered the Prince.

The command horrified Neil. He surveyed the lonely spot; the rocky inhospitable shore which the sea was lipping leisurely; the rough track of road a gun-shot away, along which any might chance to pass; the pale young face and prone limbs of the grotesquely-clad Prince. 'Shall I, for the sake of all the knives in the universe, leave you here all alone?' he gasped.

Charles shrugged his shoulders. 'There will be no fears for me. Do what you are ordered, Neil.' His colour rose. 'I absolutely must have it, so no more words.'

'But, sir, it is madness——'

'Neil! you heard what I said.'

Neil ventured further protests, until he saw Charles on the verge of one of his fits of rage. His hands were clenched, his breath coming

quickly, the brown eyes smouldering. With intense reluctance Neil went off on his errand, only his idea of duty and his strong common-sense speeding him. If the case were discovered, it might be a clue to the Prince's presence.

Kingsburgh, following in the track of a flock of sheep obviously startled by something or somebody, came upon a weird apparition. An enormous female (apparently) advanced upon him, brandishing a cudgel. 'Are you Alexander MacDonald of Kingsburgh?' demanded a high, imperious voice.

Kingsburgh admitted his identity. A moment before he had been near to laughing at this extraordinary vision, the next his mirth was turned to grief for the circumstances and peril which necessitated such a disguise. 'Then all is well,' said Charles pleasantly. 'Come, let us be jogging on.'

Kingsburgh kissed the Prince's hand and gave him the simple provisions that Lady Margaret had sent. The Prince drank the wine, and was nibbling a biscuit in strong teeth when Neil, with the case of knives, returned. Charles drew the young Highlander down beside him. 'Was I harsh with you, my dear? I did not mean it.' He gave Neil the biscuits, saying like a child, 'Please keep them for me till another time.'

They started for Kingsburgh House about sunset, but there was no concealing dark. The long, light night of the island lay over the landscape. Ere the trio had advanced far on their seven miles' tramp they were overtaken by Flora and Mrs MacDonald, with the latter's man and maid, all riding. Mrs MacDonald was extremely anxious

to catch a glimpse of the royal features, shrouded by the hood, but her eagerness was nothing to the excitement and curiosity of her maid. 'I have never seen such an impudent-looking woman,' gasped the girl. 'Or else she is a man in woman's dress.' Flora, alarmed by the shrewdness of the guess, explained calmly that the stranger was an Irishwoman named Betty Burke, whom she was taking home with her to spin for her mother. It seemed prudent to persuade her companions to go by another road. The last glimpse which she had of her charge until they met again at Kingsburgh House was Charles, lifting his petticoats high in both hands, to wade with immense strides across a flooded part of the track. When remonstrated with by Neil he dropped them, and allowed them to trail and be well soaked in the next water they traversed. Forgetful of his assumed humble station, he walked with Kingsburgh, chatting loudly. Country people, returning from church, stared aghast at the big Irishwoman who had the impudence to associate thus freely with Sir Alexander MacDonald's factor. Kingsburgh's warnings were in vain. 'If you would remember to curtsy, sir, instead of bowing, when people salute you; and pray do not hold your skirts so high, or you are certain of discovery.' He ended despairingly, 'Your enemies call you a Pretender. If so, you are the worst at your trade that ever I saw.'

## CHAPTER V.

‘A prince, though in distress, his fair demeanour,  
Lovely behaviour, unappalled spirit,  
Spoke him not base in blood, however clouded.  
The brute beasts have both rocks and caves to fly to  
And men the altars of the church, to us  
He came for refuge.’

JOHN FORD.

MRS MACDONALD of Kingsburgh was preparing for the well-earned sleep of the weary housewife. She had performed her duties to God and man by worshipping in the house of her Creator and by attending to the ways of her household. She did not expect her husband, as it was between eleven and twelve at night, and during Sir Alexander’s absence some business might well have detained Kingsburgh at Mugstot. She had just tied the strings of her ample night-cap when a maid-servant came to the door. Her master had returned and brought company.

‘What company?’ Mrs MacDonald struggled with annoyance and yawns.

‘Milton’s daughter and some company with her.’

Mrs MacDonald felt extremely relieved. Flora was almost like one of the family. It had become an open secret that she might some day be a daughter of the house. ‘Milton’s daughter,’ rejoined the good lady, ‘is very welcome to come here with any company she pleases to bring. But you’ll give my service to her, and tell her to make free with anything in the house, for I am very sleepy and cannot see her this night.’ The



maid withdrew to give the message. Mrs MacDonald, slightly puzzled by this visit from Flora so unceremoniously late, went on with her preparations for the night.

She was disturbed in them a second time a few minutes later. On this occasion it was her young daughter who peeped in. 'Oh, mother, my father has brought in a very odd, muckle, ill-shaken-up wife as ever I saw! I never saw the like of her, and he has gone into the hall with her.'

The child ran away, giggling, well pleased by this entertaining break in the dullness of an eighteenth-century Sabbath. Mrs MacDonald had scant time to ponder over the eccentricities of Flora's 'company' before Kingsburgh himself came in. 'Oh, you are not yet in bed.' His remark sounded relieved. 'Fasten on your clothes again, and get some supper for me and the company.'

'Pray, goodman, what company is this you have brought with you?' She frowned, puzzled. 'I thought it was Flora.'

Kingsburgh grinned. 'Why, you shall know in good time. Only make haste and get supper.'

The good lady hurried, but was hindered for want of her keys. Her daughter, dispatched to fetch them, refused to go into the hall. The muckle woman was walking up and down, and she was frightened. Mrs MacDonald scolded her child for such timorousness, but on looking in and beholding the extraordinary figure pacing backwards and forwards with long strides, grew considerably alarmed herself. Kingsburgh, interrogated as to the stranger's identity—What lang, odd hussy was this he had brought to the

house?—scolded his wife, laughed, and bade her go for the keys herself. ‘Did you never see a woman before?’ he jeered good-humouredly. ‘What frights you at seeing a woman? Pray, make haste, and get us some supper.’

Mrs MacDonald sidled into the hall and made a dash for her keys. The stranger was sitting down, but rose, tall and gaunt, at her approach. Mrs MacDonald felt herself saluted in the manner of the times, but it was no woman’s cheek that touched hers. A bristly beard scraped unmistakably against her face. The truth, the terror of it, rushed over her. Here was some disguised Jacobite, some fugitive from Culloden. She ran out of the hall, with trembling knees, the keys mechanically clutched in her hand.

She sought out her husband, who still appeared to regard the affair as excellent fun. ‘Tell me who that is,’ she whispered. ‘I’m sure it’s no woman, but some distressed gentleman or nobleman. When he saluted me, I felt a beard.’ She wrung her hands. ‘Oh, from the moment I heard that you had company with you I was seized with a dread I could not account for.’

Kingsburgh smiled. His answer rang out proudly. ‘Why, my dear, it is the Prince. You have the honour to have him in your house.’

‘The Prince!’ Poor Mrs MacDonald almost collapsed. ‘Oh Lord, we are a’ ruined and undone for ever. We will a’ be hanged now.’

Her husband was made of stouter stuff. ‘Hout, goodwife, we will die but aince; and if we are hanged for this, I am sure we die in a good cause.’ He clapped her encouragingly on the

shoulder. 'Pray make no delay. Go get us some supper. Fetch what is readiest. You have eggs and butter and cheese in the house. Get them as quickly as possible.'

Mrs MacDonald, visions of Holyrood and St James's before her eyes, nearly wept with mortification. 'Eggs and butter and cheese!' she wailed. 'What a supper is that for a Prince?'

Kingsburgh shook his head. 'Oh, goodwife, little do you know how this poor Prince has been living for some time past. These, I can assure you, will be a feast to him. Besides, it would be unwise in dressing a formal supper, because this would serve to raise the curiosity of the servants, and they would be making their observations. The less ceremony and work the better. Make haste, and see that you come to supper.'

This last raised a fresh difficulty in the mind of the humble woman. 'I come to supper! I know not how to behave before Majesty.'

Kingsburgh scoffed gently. 'Majesty! He's just a hungry lad.' He added firmly, 'You must come, for he will not eat a bit till he sees you at the table, and you will find it no difficult matter to behave before him, so obliging and easy is he in conversation.'

Charles was ravenous. After a scant repast of scorched kidneys, eaten in two portions with a serious alarm in between, the cold comfort of milk on the voyage, bread and butter and spring water, and Lady Margaret's wine and biscuits, he did ample justice to Mrs MacDonald's good fare. He devoured roasted eggs, minced collops, quantities of bread and butter, washing the whole

down with two bottles of small beer. Mrs MacDonald, alternately worshipping and stuffing him, soon lost her awe of royalty. He asked for brandy after his meal, adding that he had found great comfort from it in the miseries of his wanderings. Miss MacDonald's grave, rather disapproving eyes being absent—she had retired to bed, worn out—Charles became very lively. Kingsburgh's cunning brew of punch was much to his taste. He laughed aside his host's diffident suggestion that he must be weary, and would be wiser to secure some sleep. He sat smoking and jesting, utterly refusing to go to bed. When Kingsburgh at length insisted, holding the punch-bowl firmly out of further temptation, Charles rose, laughing, and clutched at it. It broke in half, a catastrophe which somewhat sobered him. Was it a bad omen? he wondered uneasily, more concerned for his own welfare than for the destruction of Mrs MacDonald's heirloom. The severed fragments were put carefully aside by Kingsburgh, to be treasured in his family to the third and fourth generation, together with the Prince's old pipe and ragged brogues. Charles thankfully exchanged those for unused specimens of each. 'When I come to see your Royal Highness in St James's, sir, I shall bring these with me.' Kingsburgh held up the disreputable shoes. 'They will serve to remind you of the night you spent under my roof.' He added musingly, 'It is strange that I should have gone to Mugstot to-day, for I had no business to take me there.'

Charles's face glowed. 'It is not strange. Providence sent you there to-day to take care of me.'

Once in the comfortable bed prepared for him by Mrs MacDonald's kind hands, he fell into a deep, dreamless sleep. Truly he was the most unconcerned person under that roof, reflected Kingsburgh, for the others in the secret were deeply apprehensive about his safety. The hours went on, until the short remainder of the night gave place to dawn, dawn gradually to daylight, but still Charles slept. Flora was anxious that preparations for their start should be set on foot, but Kingsburgh, venturing into the room, returned to report that the Prince was still sleeping so soundly that he could not bring himself to rouse him. It was past midday when he paid his second visit. The Prince was just awake, and looked less haggard and weather-beaten after his long night. He sat up and smiled at Kingsburgh like a child. 'And how did your Royal Highness sleep?' inquired the factor.

Charles yawned, stretching long arms above his head. 'Never better, for I have rested exceedingly well, having slept, I believe, nine or ten hours without interruption.' He patted the bed. 'Sit down, *mon ami*.'

They talked a little of the Prince's affairs. Kingsburgh was better informed as to recent happenings than Charles, whose scant information had had to be gleaned from the stale newspapers smuggled to him through the agency of Lady Margaret MacDonald. Charles asked about the heads of the clans. Kingsburgh instanced MacDonald of Glencoe and Cameron of Dungallon as two who had surrendered themselves. Charles ignored Glencoe. In the presence of one MacDonald it was perhaps unwise to criticise the



action of another, but a Cameron was different. 'Cameron of Dungallon! Is not that Lochiel's major?' Kingsburgh replied that it was the same. The Prince shrugged his shoulders. 'Why, I always looked upon Dungallon as a man of sense,' he remarked peevishly.

He pouted a little, playing with the strings of the nightcap provided by Mrs MacDonald. His own state, his own danger, occupied him chiefly, but now and again a word, a slice of chance news, a reference to some name out of the stained pages of the past months brought home to him that others were in want, in tribulation, prisoners, fugitive, hunted even as he.

Kingsburgh, watching the expressive young face, thought it prudent to change the subject. He spoke of some of the other leaders in the ill-fated campaign. 'I have heard rumours as to the conduct of Lord George Murray. Can your Royal Highness lay treachery or any such ill behaviour to his charge?'

Charles sat up, his eyes flashing. He was an inconsistent creature, whose opinions were as varied and inconstant as a weathercock. 'I will never allow anything of treachery or villainy to be laid to the charge of Lord George Murray.' A dozen memories—inconsequent, irritating, painful, culminating in the recollection of Lord George's last letter to him—flashed across his mind, like wind disturbing the smooth surface of a loch. 'But I cannot help owning that I had much to bear from his temper,' he admitted.

Kingsburgh left him, with a hint that he had better rouse himself and dress. Charles was still putting off the evil hour—it was so long since he

had slept in a bed that he had almost forgotten what one was like, he reflected pathetically—when sounds of feminine argument reached him from the other side of the door. Charles overheard the whispered words, ‘Flora, do you think you could get me a lock of his bonny hair?’ but the reply was inaudible. ‘Who is there?’ he called imperiously. The door opened to admit Mrs MacDonald, holding a reluctant Flora by the hand. ‘Sir, it is I,’ explained his hostess, ‘and I am importuning Miss Flora to come in and get a lock of your hair to me, and she refuses to do it.—What, my dear? You won’t, because the Prince is not yet out of bed. No harm will happen to you. He is too good to harm you or any person.’

Charles coloured violently. He saw in bitter retrospect a room at Bannockburn House and a dark woman who stood beside his bed. ‘Desire Miss MacDonald to come in.’ His voice was cold. ‘What should make her afraid to come where I am?’ He looked at her, slight, calm, dignified, so different from that dark creature Clementina Walkinshaw, with her ardours, her poor heart bestowed unasked, her passion and fervour. ‘Pray sit down, madam.’ Flora obeyed, and he laid a dishevelled head, worth thirty thousand pounds, in her lap. ‘Take all you wish, ma’am,’ he told Mrs MacDonald.

It was Flora who cut the lock, afterwards dividing it with her friend. The Prince’s hair, formerly Morison’s pride, was darkened and tangled by neglect and exposure to all weathers until it resembled seaweed. She sat frigid under a privilege that half the ladies in Scotland would have bartered their virtue to enjoy, and was

relieved when the strong, lean young arms unclasped themselves from her waist. The Prince lay down again amongst his pillows. The thin face and hands, dark with sunburn, against the white background and framing tartan curtains, had a pathos, an appeal before which Miss MacDonald steeled her heart. He was a fascinating creature, this Prince who made a nation dance to his careless piping, but her duty was to provide for his safety, not to succumb to his charm.

‘I should recommend your Royal Highness to dress yourself without loss of time.’ She rose. ‘You had better put on your woman’s attire, sir.’

Charles’s face lengthened. ‘Those accursed petticoats again? *Hélas!*’

‘It is wiser, sir, in case the servants who saw you last night should watch you leaving the house. When you have gone some distance, you can exchange the dress for a Highland suit.’

The two women curtsied and withdrew. Outside, Mrs MacDonald clutched Flora’s arm. ‘Will he be safe?’

‘We must trust so.’ Flora’s voice was calm. ‘There was no other way of saving him but the single one we used, and that had the appearance of a desperate attempt at best.’

‘But, my dear Flora, the boatmen who rowed the boat to Skye? What has become of them?’

‘They returned directly to South Uist. We took good care to depone them before they parted from us.’

Mrs MacDonald shook her comely head. ‘I wish you had sunk the boat and kept the boatmen in Skye, where they could have been concealed, and then we would have known the better

what to have done with the Prince, because his enemies by this means would have lost scent of him. Your deponing of them will not signify a farthing. If once the military get hold of them, they will terrify them out of their senses and make them forget their oath.'

A shrill cry from inside the room interrupted their colloquy. 'Miss, miss, pray help me. I cannot make out for myself how these garments should be put on.'

Flora sternly ignored the appeal. 'Mrs MacDonald will send her daughter to assist your Royal Highness.'

Charles, rested and refreshed, appeared to consider his situation in the light of a good joke. He became nearly helpless from mirth as young Anne MacDonald dressed him once more in his despised and discarded woman's clothes. 'He was like to fall over with laughter,' the damsel reported to her mother, 'and deil a preen could he put in for himself.' She was at last leaving him, finally attired, when a shriek from Charles recalled her. 'Oh, miss, you have forgot my apron. Where is my apron? Pray get me my apron, here, for that is a principal part of my dress.'

He sobered as he bade good-bye to the warm-hearted woman who had risked her all to shelter him. Flora, after putting the finishing touches to her supposed maid's head-gear, had gone off on horseback to Portree, leaving Charles and Kingsburgh to follow on foot. Half-way up a hill-side stood a little wood, its trees dark against a rainy sunset. In this meagre shelter the Prince thankfully parted with the garments of Betty Burke, which were buried under a bush.

Mrs MacDonald's apprehensions as to the boatmen's betrayal of the secret were shortly justified. Terrified by the military, they described minutely the attire of the supposed servant-maid, even down to the pattern of the gown. It had served the Prince well, but his relief was great at finding himself once more in the Highland dress supplied by Kingsburgh, a claymore in his hand. Kingsburgh gazed with loving loyalty and admiration at the tall, erect young form—a king's son indeed. Their farewell was brief and painful. In the dusk veiling the landscape the Prince held Kingsburgh in his arms, assuring him passionately that he would never forget his services. At the time he meant it, but lasting gratitude was no part of his nature. 'Alas! Kingsburgh, I am afraid I shall not meet with another MacDonald in my difficulties,' he told his new friend.

The inn at Portree stood in a little narrow street of haphazard houses. Its windows were blurred golden squares in the night's darkness when the Prince and Neil MacEachain, under the guidance of a small boy named M'Queen, drew near to its welcome shelter. Since leaving Kingsburgh House heavy rain had fallen, soaking the Prince to the skin. He was hungry and impatient, sending the boy, who knew nothing of his identity, forward to the inn to tell Captain Donald Roy MacDonald that a gentleman wanted to speak to him. Donald Roy, who had spent hours making periodical excursions into the wild, inclement evening to seek for signs of the Prince's appearance, hobbled to meet him as rapidly as his crippled foot permitted. It was



too dark to discern each other's faces, yet Charles would permit no ceremonious greeting. Donald Roy exclaimed in horror at His Royal Highness's plight. 'It does not matter for me.' Charles put this futile compassion aside impatiently. 'But I am more than sorry that Miss MacDonald should be exposed to such weather.'

'She is at the inn, sir.'

'Then let us go there quickly. I vow I am starving.'

Their three figures were dimly visible through the rain and darkness to Malcolm MacLeod, who lurked discreetly in the vicinity of the little public-house to inform Donald Roy that all preparations were made and a boat in waiting. MacLeod sent a message, asking Donald to speak to him. Donald promised to hasten the Prince's departure, and Malcolm uncomplainingly continued his cold, wet vigil. He was soaked and weary, but those who served Prince Charlie cared for none of these things.

The close, homely room, thick with peat-reek, seemed heaven after the storm and chill outside. The fire and smoky lights illuminated the little group of travellers—Flora in her draggled riding-habit; Neil and Donald Roy, the damp steaming from their clothes; the Prince, soaked, but cheerful. He stood in the middle of the floor, gulping down the dram instantly demanded, the wet running from his dank tartans, forming little pools upon the boards. Donald Roy lent him a dry philibeg, and joined MacEachain in urging the Prince to put on a dry shirt. Charles glanced in embarrassment at Flora, who remarked calmly that it was no time for standing upon ceremony.

Outside fierce rain lashed the windows, and a lost wind went sobbing up the street. The landlord, eyeing his strange guest with none-too-friendly curiosity, brought in a homely meal of bread, butter, cheese, and roasted fish. Charles devoured the plain fare hungrily, but he was thirsty as well, and inquired presently what he could have to drink. He made a grimace on learning that the only beverages available were whisky and water, even beer or ale being unobtainable in a Skye inn. The Prince had never learned to relish the crude-tasting spirit of the country. He suggested milk, but a half-hearted search proved that there was none in the house. 'Then you had better drink water,' Donald Roy advised in a low voice.

The water, when it came, was clean and clear enough, but served in a most unattractive fashion. The vessel holding it was an old cog which the landlord was accustomed to use to bail out his boat. Its edge was rough and uninviting. Charles's disgusted stare was so evident that Donald Roy feared lest the landlord, then in the room piling peats on the fire, should intercept it and guess his guest's real condition. Even in shirt-sleeves, eating with the healthy greed of a schoolboy, there was something so noble about the carriage of the stranger, in the lines of the haughty profile, that it were easy to see he was other than he purported to be.

Donald Roy leaned nearer. 'Drink out of it, sir, for though it looks ill, yet it is clean; and if your Royal Highness should show any nicety, it might raise a suspicion about you in the landlord's mind.' The Prince whispered that he was

right. He swallowed the cold, bodiless stuff, unmurmuring, and rose to put on the rest of his damp garments again.

The sullen-faced landlord had gone out of the room, but the fugitives still spoke with lowered voices, lest he should eavesdrop. Charles listened in dismay to the increasing rain against the small windows. 'I design to remain here, in place of venturing out in such a storm,' he announced decidedly. Twenty-four hours ago the wild night would have seemed less distasteful. Now, after the warmth and cheer at Kingsburgh House, his first sleep for weeks in a bed of civilisation, cool sheets wrapping his tired body, instead of sodden sail or soaked heather under it, he dreaded the enemy elements. He read strong dissent in the faces round him. 'Why should I not lie here?' he demanded peevishly.

Donald Roy shook his head. 'This is a public-house, sir, frequented by all sorts of folks, and therefore it would not be safe for your Royal Highness to stay any time in it. If they saw a stranger it would make them curious to inquire who he was, and this might prove of dangerous consequence.'

Charles acquiesced unwillingly. His odd luggage, consisting of a cold hen, four shirts, a bottle of brandy, a bottle of whisky—purchased from the landlord—and a lump of sugar, he distributed about his person, tying the whisky bottle to one side of his belt and the remaining articles in a napkin at the other. The landlord was summoned and paid, Charles also buying a roll of coarse tobacco. His carelessness over the change worried Donald Roy. If he were

so lordly, he whispered, the landlord would certainly suspect more than ever. Charles put away the coins and repaid Flora a borrowed half-crown. Before this he had begged Donald Roy to accompany him, a request which the wounded man reluctantly refused. His lameness rendered it impossible for him to travel any distance, unless on horseback. He pointed out his uselessness, but Charles continued with his entreaties.

When, the reckoning paid, the landlord had gone away, the Prince coaxed anew. 'Are you afraid to go along with me? I can assure you so long as I have, you shall not want.' He laid his hands on Donald Roy's shoulders. The thin, eager young face was close to the MacDonald's, a hot cheek pressed to his. 'I have always found myself safe in the hands of a MacDonald,' Charles murmured. 'And so long as I can have a MacDonald along with me still, I shall think myself safe enough.'

He was brought at length to see the wisdom of refusal, but his face was clouded as he turned away to say farewell to Neil and Flora. The former he trusted to see again, bidding him in the meantime attend Miss MacDonald to her destination next day. He held Flora's hands long. At length he kissed her cheek, very gently and respectfully, his eyes wet. 'For all that has happened, I hope we shall meet in St James's yet, and there I will reward you for what you have done,' he told her. Poor Prince! So rash, optimistic, and confident. Her thoughts were warm towards him as he went out of her life for ever. The night and the rain and the

darkness received him, leaving her alone with Neil in the lighted inn, a prey to foreboding. For herself she had neither fear nor regrets, but her heart was heavy for that hunted head. She knew nothing of his plans or destination. It had been judged wiser to leave her in entire ignorance of both in case she might be questioned on suspicion of the part that she had played in the affair. She guessed shrewdly that he was bound for Raasa, this being opposite to Portree, but she asked no questions. 'Tell nobody—no, not our lady—which way I am gone, for it is right that my course should not be known,' were Charles's parting words to Donald Roy.

The black-browed landlord certainly queried the quality of his late customer. Donald Roy, looking back as they left the inn, saw the stout figure framed in the lighted doorway, peering after them. He signed to the Prince, who followed in the opposite direction of that which they were to take, until out of sight of the inn, when they turned and retraced their steps to the rendezvous. They walked with bent heads before the stinging, salt-laden wind, the rain steady and chill. Half a mile from the inn Malcolm MacLeod met them and conducted the Prince to the boat waiting under Sgeir Mhór, a rock on the north side of Portree Harbour. Malcolm had fought at Cul-loden, under command of his chief, the Laird of Raasa. He was, like his Prince, a hunted fugitive, and his cousin Murdoch MacLeod still suffered from the effects of a wound received upon the same disastrous occasion. The young laird, as custom styled John MacLeod of Raasa, had not been 'out,' in the current phrase and could go



about unmolested, although his territory had been ravaged and burned by Hanoverian troops. Such was his desire, notwithstanding, to behold this Prince who stole hearts and turned the wits of the wise and sober, forcing them to follow his mad piping, that the young man insisted on making one of the party. Donald Roy and Malcolm MacLeod begged him to consider the risk and its attendant consequences, but a blind loyalty, an eager curiosity drove him on. 'I am resolved to see the Prince, if it should cost me my head and my estate,' he cried.

Charles was glum at parting with his remaining MacDonald, and little disposed to inquire into the toil and trouble taken by the three MacLeods on his behalf. The Government soldiers had destroyed all the boats on Raasa excepting one small one, spared to young Raasa at the intercession of Sir Alexander MacDonald, and a larger one adroitly concealed by Murdoch MacLeod. This last was willingly launched, after being dragged for a Highland mile over impossible obstacles. Two servants, John Mackenzie and Donald MacFriar, who had served in the Highland army, the one as sergeant, the other as a private man, were pressed into the danger as boatmen and sworn to secrecy. Young Raasa, excited and overjoyed, waited in the boat for hours, despite the pouring rain, with his brother Murdoch, who declared that he would gladly risk his body once more for his Prince.

The tall, dark figure came towards them. Young Raasa started up, swift to pay his homage, but Charles refused to permit any ceremony. He pressed the lump of sugar, somewhat the worse

for wear, into Donald Roy's hands, requesting him to give it to Miss MacDonald. 'I fear that she will get no sugar where she is going.' Donald Roy refused to take it, and after a friendly argument entrusted it privately to Malcolm MacLeod for the Prince's own use. He himself was to gather what news he could of Government suspicions as to Charles's movements, and bring any intelligence to His Royal Highness at Raasa in a few days' time.

Dawn was coming up in a red and saffron sky, touching the clouds with a pinky flush. The boat moved off, and the lame man, after watching its dark shape and waving figures out of sight, returned to the inn. The landlord, moving idly about the place, frowsy and dishevelled in the growing light, put a string of questions as to his late visitor. He looked sulkily disbelieving of Donald Roy's glib story that this was a Jacobite fugitive, one Sir John MacDonald, an Irishman, anxious to seek safety on the mainland. The man gruffly promised to keep the secret. 'I have a strong notion that the gentleman might happen to be the Prince in disguise,' he muttered in Gaelic. 'He had something about him that looked very noble.'

The name of Charles MacNab, the landlord of the Portree inn, goes down to history solely because for two hours he had under his roof the proscribed and fugitive Prince Charles. Well for him that he was not like that other householder who turned away an anxious husband and a wife near to childbirth because there was no room for them in his inn.

## CHAPTER VI.

‘Are you not tired with travel, Sir?’

No, no,

I am fresh and lusty.

This day shall be ever

A holiday to me that brings my prince

Under my humble roof.’

PHILIP MASSINGER.

IT was some six miles, in choppy water, across to Raasa. Great humped-backed hills glowered down upon the boat and its occupants. Charles was gay and hopeful. The fresh morning air blew in his face, sweet after the stuffy inn and the hours of rainy darkness. ‘The friends who show their friendship in distress are the real friends,’ he declared. He sighed a little. ‘I hope that my friends will not have reason to repent of the services done me.’ He fell into a muse, chin in hand. ‘I will happily yet end what I began, or die in the attempt,’ he muttered.

His brow clouded. In his ears there rang a cracked and warning voice. ‘The hunted head atween the four seas.’ He looked at the tumbling green water on all sides, shivered, crossed himself. ‘The Judas price.’ Hé, hé, thirty thousand pounds for the person of the Pretender’s eldest son, dead or alive. A fortune for an individual, wealth for a clan, and yet—and yet—‘Nae hand in Scotland shall be found to grasp it.’

He fell asleep during the passage, for he was

very wearied. The rest gazed with worshipping love at the pale, clear-cut features, the soft damp hair flattened to the high brow. They would guard him with their lives, eyes meeting other eyes declared in silent pledge.

At daybreak they landed upon Raasa. It was a place of desolation. Houses had been burned and plundered, cattle driven away, the laird's belongings stolen, men and women who had never seen the Prince subjected to insult, outrage, ill-treatment, for the sin of rebellion in the acts of their chief. The only place where Charles might shelter was a low hut, but he found it possible to make up for his lost night's sleep, while his companions watched over him. Young Raasa, as the only one of the party who could come and go freely, was dispatched in quest of provisions. He returned some two hours afterwards, carrying a plump kid in his plaid, together with fresh cream and butter. Charles was callously pleased with the slaughter of this innocent, and feasted freely off the same. He jested about his acquired Highland tastes, declaring that the coarse oat bread was preferable to biscuit. The day had grown clear and windy, the bright tints in sky and sea a sad contrast to blackened walls and roofless homesteads. When he had finished eating, the Prince strolled restlessly about, asking quick, curt questions as to the depredations of the Hanoverian troops. His face darkened on being told unwillingly of the sore destruction of property and life, but presently he brightened again. 'Instead of those houses burned, I will yet build others of stone,' he cried eagerly. His gaiety and courage surprised the MacLeods. He beckoned

Malcolm MacLeod to walk with him as he paced a narrow green near the cottage. 'This is a bitter hard life,' he acknowledged grimly, 'but I would rather live ten years in this way than be taken by my enemies.'

Young Raasa asked, 'What does your Royal Highness think your enemies would do to you, sir, should you have the misfortune to fall into their hands?'

The Prince's head lifted haughtily. 'I do not believe that they would dare to take my life publicly.' Memories, grim, relentless, calling up the fated ghost of Monmouth, shadowed his proud courage. 'But I dread being destroyed privately, by poison or assassination.' His voice sank.

'God forbid, sir!' Young Raasa gazed at him with clear eyes full of innocent worship. 'Surely your Royal Highness must be monstrous strong to bear such fatigues?' he hazarded.

Charles shrugged his shoulders. 'Since the battle of Culloden I have endured more than would kill a hundred. Providence does not design this for nothing. I'm thus certainly reserved for some good end.' The old delusion, the driving ambition upheld him confidently.

As the hours drew on towards evening he became anxious to leave Raasa. The island was so small, only ten miles in length and three in breadth, while in places it narrowed to a bare half-mile. He felt restless and insecure, his eagerness to be gone from it increased by the sight of a chapman who had aroused suspicions that he might be a spy. For some days he



had been going about selling tobacco, and still lingered, although his stock was exhausted. The MacLeods watched with grim mouths as he approached the hut. A blunt and cold-blooded proposal to shoot him met with their united approval, but the Prince was appalled. 'God forbid that we should take away a man's life who may be innocent, while we can preserve our own,' he gasped. There were some moments of acute suspense, but the man passed on, apparently unsuspecting of the hut or its occupants. Charles was very pale. He had seen into these fierce, ruthless hearts, unhesitating where their Prince's safety was in question, to take if needful the life of a fellow-being. He bowed his proud head, shamed. It was at moments like these that he realised what he was costing a nation.

Young Raasa had arranged a rendezvous with Donald Roy at his sister's house. The Prince decided to accompany him there. The night had turned wet, with a high wind blowing and a threat in the dark clouds along the horizon. Before they were out of touch with the shore the sea became so rough that the small, light craft was tossed in every direction. Charles was the most unconcerned person on board, and presented a deaf ear to the entreaties of the rest that he would consent to put back to land. He shrugged his shoulders at the spray and waves dashing over the six people huddled together in a vessel that barely held them. Malcolm MacLeod baled energetically, and the others strove at the oars. Presently the Prince tried his lately acquired skill in Erse, singing a Highland song. The sounds were feeble but

heartening, a defiance of the grey rain and screaming gale. Suddenly he stopped, strangely sobered, and remarked, 'Gentlemen, I hope to thank you for this trouble yet at St James's.'

After three hours' struggle they approached Nicholson's Rock, a dangerous bit of the Skye coast, near Scorobreck. The Prince, exclaiming, 'God be thanked we are safe here,' leaped into the creamy surf out of the boat and assisted to haul it up to dry ground. His coat, in itself a heavy, cumbersome garment, was rendered the more so by being soaked through. Malcolm MacLeod was eager to carry it for His Royal Highness, but Charles refused. He was as well able to take it himself, he declared with gay defiance, as they struggled up the steep and rocky ascent. They searched for shelter, sighting nothing more habitable than a cow-byre. A fear lest there should be someone already occupying it sent young Raasa ahead to investigate, while the Prince followed at a distance with the rest. The two MacLeods were gravely concerned for him. He could not remain exposed to the weather on such a terrible night. Charles laughed contemptuously. 'I don't care a button for it, for I have been abroad a hundred such nights,' he retorted. Memories of wet fields, soaked heather, damp rushes, reeking sail, all serving him as bed, made him scornful of rain and discomfort.

Fortunately, as young Raasa reported, the byre was empty, and in its musty dimness the Prince settled down contentedly enough. They lit a fire, and supped off cheese and crumbs of bread. The rain still fell heavily, reducing the

landscape to a veil of grey. The dismal prospect and surroundings insensibly communicated themselves to the Prince's spirits. He fell silent, refusing, at first courteously, then impatiently and irritably, Captain MacLeod's solicitous entreaties that he would change his damp garments and take some rest. He continued to sit there, huddled in his wet clothes, reckless of rheumatism and chills, until at length fatigue sent him into an uneasy nap. It was broken and restless, the Prince starting repeatedly and muttering aloud in more than one foreign tongue. Malcolm MacLeod once made out the words: 'O poor Scotland! O poor Scotland!' Charles roused at last, saw that the faces near him were friendly, and drew a long sigh. 'Go to sleep, MacLeod,' he ordered. 'I will talk to your cousin. You are not weary? But, *mon cher*, you will be, for we have much fatigue before us.'

He slept himself by the side of the dying fire, a deep sleep which lasted until late next day. The sun had come out, showing great shapes of mountain and a sea of fretted sapphire. The air was full of the hum of insects, the screaming of sea-birds. Charles was glad to exchange the stuffy byre for a green hillock, where he sat with Murdoch MacLeod, while Malcolm and the two boatmen took a much-needed rest. As the hours wore by he grew fretful for the return of young Raasa from Donald Roy. 'How soon do you think he can arrive?' he demanded repeatedly of his companion. 'I'll wait for him till eight o'clock and no longer.'

There was still no sign of young Raasa when

a red sun was dipping down to the edge of the sea. Charles was impatient to proceed. 'Can you travel well?' he asked Murdoch MacLeod doubtfully. The other shook his head. He was still far from recovered of his Culloden wound. 'Then can your cousin travel well?' The Prince bent nearer, sinking his voice. 'Is he a discreet man? Can I trust him?'

Murdoch MacLeod smiled proudly. 'My cousin Malcolm is both, sir, and your Royal Highness may safely trust him, even with your life.'

Charles nodded eagerly. 'That is good.' He outlined his plans, speaking rapidly. 'I expect to get a boat on the other side of Skye to carry me to the island of Rum, and in case that fails, you are to go immediately and make ready your six-oar boat you formerly recommended to me as a good goer, and bring it in two days to the next town here, where Captain MacLeod shall meet you if I am away; and if not, I shall meet you myself.' He frowned a little. 'And if it be thought dangerous for us to pass to the mainland in your boat through the small ferry that divides the isle of Skye from the mainland, by reason of the guards posted there, Donald Roy must go to Sleat and prepare another boat for me there, so that if I miss one I'll be sure of another.' He laid his long hand on Murdoch's arm. 'This you must take great care to manage aright, as it is an affair of great consequence. It will be a piece of great friendship, for I'll never forget the services my friends do me in distress. I should be very ungrateful if I would.' The proud face flushed. 'As for your brother, young Raasa,' the Prince added,

'it should be kept a dead secret his having any hand in my escape, for fear it do him harm, for I'm sure I'll not tell it.'

He parted reluctantly from Murdoch MacLeod and the two boatmen. The 'case of knives' which had occasioned the argument with Neil MacEachain, a delicate trifle of French workmanship, he gave to Murdoch. 'Keep them for me till I see you again,' he requested. He took the buckles off his shoes and tore away his shirt ruffles, draping his plaid also, in order to make himself look as ordinary as possible. 'Can you walk barefooted?' he inquired of Malcolm MacLeod. 'By barefooted, I mean can you walk in your shoes without stockings? That is the way I used to walk at my diversions in Italy.' A cloud shadowed the eager face as he spoke. How far away that seemed: the woods of a sunny southern land; the self-imposed hardships; the austere comfort of the palace of the Apostles, ever open to the return of the young wanderer; James's grave welcome.

They walked away, until the byre and the three faithful friends were out of sight. Charles carried his cudgel, but MacLeod shouldered the Prince's small bundle. Neither spoke for some considerable distance, when MacLeod ventured respectfully: 'Your Royal Highness will pardon me to ask where you are going, for I dread that you may chance to fall into the hands of some party or another, if you do not take exceeding good care, as there are many small parties dispersed up and down the hills.' He cast an uneasy glance towards their dun shapes, motionless, foreboding, against the fading pink of the sunset sky.



The Prince's answer came with the simplicity which never failed to strike the chord of responsive devotion. 'Why, MacLeod, I throw myself entirely into your hands, and leave you to do with me what you please. Only I want to go to Strath, MacKinnon's country. I hope you will accompany me, an' you think you can lead me safe enough into Strath?'

'I will go with you where you please, sir; and I think I can undertake to bring you into MacKinnon's country safe enough, provided you go by sea.' Malcolm's face was anxious. 'Your Royal Highness can easily do that, for I really do not think it so safe for you to go by land, by reason of the several parties that are searching the country.'

Charles was gaily obstinate. He preferred to go by land. 'Risk? *Alors*, there is no doing anything in our situation without running risks. Let us start immediately. I know the way very well.'

MacLeod smiled. 'Has your Royal Highness been here before? No? Then I must know it much better, and I must tell you, sir, that we have a long journey to make, no less than twenty-four or thirty long miles. I dare not lead you the direct road, but take you byways, and go here and there across the country to keep as free as we can of parties scattered up and down.'

Charles repeated impatiently: '*Bien, bien*. Then let us start.'

MacLeod glanced at the darkening sky. 'It is not far from night, sir. We may lose our way in the darkness.'

'Why should we?' The Prince's look was

haughty. 'I cannot delay. Let us be going, MacLeod.'

He set off at a good pace, for he was full of energy and apparently unimpaired in health despite all the hardships which he had passed through and was still undergoing. 'Yes, I am a swift walker,' he told MacLeod, 'and provided I can get out of musket-shot, I have no dread of a pursuit by English soldiers, but if I should be chased by a party of Highland militia, I am not so confident that I could escape them.' He laughed, glancing at his companion. 'What shall we do, MacLeod, in the event of our meeting any persons among the mountains who might attempt to kill or take us?'

MacLeod's eyes flashed. 'That depends upon their numbers, sir. If there should be no more than four of them, I'll engage to manage two.'

'And I will engage to manage the other two.'

'What does your Royal Highness think we should do if attacked by a party of English soldiers?'

'Fight, to be sure.' Charles threw back his head.

It was rough, uncivilised travelling, along the ridges of high hills and through wild moors and glens. Charles was anxious to avoid Portree, at whose twinkling lights he nevertheless cast a wistful glance, thinking of the shelter and rude plenty to be found there. They turned south, but as Sligachan was in possession of the enemy, they passed along by the top of Loch Sligachan and made for Ellagol by the circuitous way of Strath Mohr. The new moon would rise in three days' time. The sky was deep and calm,

star-pieced in between folds of cloud. They talked of many things, but by mutual consent spoke little of the past or of the future. Once the desultory conversation chanced to turn upon Lord George Murray. Charles was fatigued and uncomfortable. He remarked, sharply and irritably, that Lord George did not behave well at all with regard to obeying his orders. A faint twinge of conscience here made the Prince add that he would not say whether this were out of ignorance or with a view to betray him. 'Particularly for two or three days before the battle of Culloden,' His Royal Highness concluded vehemently, 'Lord George did scarce any one thing I desired him to do.'

MacLeod glanced at the proud, angered young face, noted the sparkle in the eyes, the quiver of the full lip, and wisely changed the topic.

They had earlier discussed the best method of disguise, the Prince at last deciding that he should pass for MacLeod's servant. The latter smiled, remembering what he had heard of Charles's attempts to play the part of Betty Burke. 'Your Royal Highness will be well advised to walk at some distance behind me.' He made the suggestion diffidently, uneasily. 'If at any time, being well known in the island, I should happen to meet with any persons and converse with them, do you, sir, show no concern at all, but sit down at a distance.' The Prince laughingly agreed. 'Can you suggest what name you should pass under?'

Charles proposed Lewie Caw, a name which recurred to his mind as that of a young surgeon

in his army. MacLeod agreed, as the real Lewie had relatives in Skye and was supposed to be in hiding with them. Charles, to carry the masquerade further, insisted, although there was no one to see, on shouldering his own bundle, which contained a curious collection, viz. two shirts, one pair of stockings, a pair of brogues, a bottle of brandy, some scraps of mouldy bread and cheese, and a three-pint stone bottle for water. He exchanged his gay tartan and gold waistcoat for MacLeod's soberer one, remarking that he hoped to give MacLeod a much better vest for his own yet. He spoke carelessly, indifferently of the hardships and privations which he was obliged to go through, adding wistfully : 'MacLeod, do you not think that God Almighty made this person of mine for doing some good yet? When I was in Italy, and dining at the King's table, very often the sweat would have been coming through my coat with the heat of the climate ; and now that I am in a cold country, of a more piercing and trying climate, and exposed to different kinds of fatigues, I really find I agree equally with both. I have had this philibeg on now for days'—he glanced down at his lean, scratched legs—'and I find I do as well with it as any of the best breeches I ever put on.' His eyes shone. 'I hope in God, MacLeod, to walk the streets of London with it yet.'

Dawn came up slowly. Charles looked about him at the soundless desolation. Nothing was to be seen but the encircling hills. He laughed low. 'I am sure the Devil cannot find us out now.'

They were nearing MacKinnon's country, and MacLeod waxed uneasy as to the inadequacy of the Prince's disguise. Many of his former adherents were about in the neighbourhood and might easily recognise him. None would mistake him for a fugitive and skulking servant-lad. The air of unconscious nobility which had attracted the suspicion of the landlord in the Portree inn was visible under the humble garb and assumed low status. Charles proposed blackening his face with gunpowder, but MacLeod would not hear of such a thing, vowing that it would only draw attention. Finally, the Prince pocketed his periwig and tied a soiled white napkin round his head. Under it the brown eyes looked out, bright and sparkling. He crammed his bonnet down nearly to his nose, declaring, 'I think I will now pass well enough for your servant, and that I am sick with the much fatigue that I have undergone. Look at me, MacLeod, and tell me what you think. How will it do?'

'It won't do yet, sir'—MacLeod's tone was despairing—'for those that have ever seen you before will still discover your face for all the disguise you are in.'

Charles looked discontented. 'This is an odd remarkable face I have got that nothing can disguise it,' he muttered.

It was less his face—weather-tanned and sun-scorched—than his air. This last betrayed him to the first two men whom they met on MacKinnon's territory. Both had been through the ill-starred campaign, and must often have seen the Prince at the zenith of his triumphs and splendour. Now, under the plain soiled Highland



garb they easily detected the form of their loved young leader. They stared at him, then fell upon their knees, kissing the edge of his plaid, the mud-encrusted brogues, the hands, marred by scratches, stings, and burns, yet still beautiful. MacLeod was disturbed at the encounter. In their distress and emotion they might easily manage to betray to any that the Prince was near and in disguise. He took from them the Highland oath, sworn upon the naked dirk, that they would be silent. Charles walked on when MacLeod rejoined him, sobered and sad. The sight of these two—fugitive, ragged, hunted as himself—brought home to him how many were seeking to save themselves from Hanoverian vengeance. MacLeod had spoken earlier of the ravages and destruction wrought by the Elector's troops. The Prince refused stubbornly to credit such things. 'Surely that man who calls himself the Duke of Cumberland, and pretends to be so great a general, cannot be guilty of such cruelties. I cannot believe them.'

'Your Royal Highness has suffered as deeply as any.'

Charles turned quickly to him. 'The fatigues and distresses I undergo signify nothing at all, for I am only a single person.' His voice shook. 'It is when I reflect on the many brave fellows who suffer in my Cause that it strikes me to the heart, and sinks very deeply into me.'

After an all-night walk through 'the worst roads in Europe,' as MacLeod irritably described them, Charles looked white and weary enough to support the fiction of a sick Lewie Caw. They

were nearing the house of MacLeod's brother-in-law at Ellagol, one John MacKinnon, who had been a captain in the Prince's service, under his chief. Charles was left outside while MacLeod ascertained if there were any danger. He found only his sister, a pretty woman with a young baby. She accepted the Lewie Caw story unquestioningly, and brought in both fugitives. Charles, entering into the spirit of his part, seated himself at a distance and required coaxing before he would eat at the same table as his supposed master. The comely Mrs MacKinnon gazed admiringly at him. MacLeod was relieved that she merely regarded him as a good-looking youth and never suspected his real quality. Her obtuseness was shared by her servant, who strongly resented being ordered to wash the Prince's feet. Charles drooped on a hard stool, thinking of Sheridan, to whom no service for his darling could seem too humble; of Burke, who loved to tend him; of the thousands who died and suffered gladly in his Cause. He had indeed found the lowest room in the house of his pilgrimage when a rough Highland hag, grumbling to herself in Erse that he was but a low country-woman's son, and why should she wash his feet indeed, performed the operation, none too gently, for a king's son.

He was worn out, but refused to do more than lie down on a bed without undressing. MacLeod promised to keep guard, and stationed his sister as sentry on a green knowe near the house, under the pretence that he and his servant would both sleep. A few hours' rest restored to the Prince his wonted energy and courage. He began to

look about him, and presently discovered Neil MacKinnon, aged three months. He picked the child up delightedly, dandled him in his strong young arms, sang to him a queer little French ditty, and, forgetting his assumed rôle, spoke of the future. 'I hope this child may be a captain in my service yet,' he cried. His flushed face and long, bright hair were bent over the baby, as he walked to and fro carrying the little creature. He was sitting by the fire, the infant in his arms, when John MacKinnon came home.

John's brother-in-law met him outside and greeted him. The eyes of both went to three ships hovering, ghostly and menacing in the mist and distance, about the coast. 'What if our Prince be on board one of them?' MacLeod suggested.

MacKinnon threw up his arms in a gesture of horror. 'God forbid! I would not wish that for anything.'

MacLeod drew nearer, sinking his voice. 'What if we had him here, John? Do you think he would be in safety enough?'

'I wish with all my heart we had him here, for he would be safe enough.' MacKinnon's voice was deep, moved.

'Well, then'—MacLeod smiled—'he is here already. He is just now in your house.' He caught John MacKinnon's arm as his kinsman was about to rush impetuously indoors and pay his homage. 'But when you go in you must be careful to take no notice of him at all. He passes for one Lewie Caw, my servant.'

John nodded. He would observe these precautions. It was easy enough to promise outside, but when he entered and saw the little tableau

by the hearth, his self-control almost forsook him. His King's son was sitting there, a thin, bedraggled figure, clad in shrunken, soiled garments, crooning to MacKinnon's baby. He met the smile of the supposed Lewie Caw across the unconscious infant's bald head, and turned away, choking down a great sob.

The brothers-in-law discussed anxiously the best measures to be taken for the Prince's safety. Eventually it was decided to scull to the mainland to hire a boat, under the pretence that it was for the use of Malcolm MacLeod. John MacKinnon departed on this errand, but on the way encountered his chief, the old Laird of MacKinnon, to whom he confided the secret of the Prince's presence at Ellagol. The laird at once insisted on visiting him and offering his services. Charles was reluctant to be handed over like a parcel to these two, and to part with MacLeod. The latter wisely pointed out the advisability of their separating, as search-parties were probably out for him, which might end in their discovering the Prince as well. He would rather run the risk of being taken prisoner himself than expose the Prince to such a hazard. 'And no matter for that at all,' he cried impetuously, 'if it can tend to promote your safety, which it cannot readily fail to do.' Charles acquiesced unwillingly, and in the windy red of a great sunset sat in the shelter of a cave upon the beach, awaiting the boat. For a parting gift he gave MacLeod a silver stock-buckle, and forced ten guineas into his hand. MacLeod, unable to help seeing that the Prince's purse was nearly as flat as a bannock,

was exceedingly reluctant to take the money, but Charles was graciously insistent. 'You will have need of money. I shall get enough when I come upon the mainland.' He held MacLeod in his thin, hard arms, his face pressed to the Highlander's tanned cheek. 'I wish it were much more for your sake,' the Prince whispered, 'and that you could have gone to the continent with me.'

He had one foot over the edge of the boat when he suddenly recollected something. 'Don't you remember that I promised to meet Murdoch MacLeod at such a place?' Malcolm replied that it was no matter. He would make His Royal Highness's apology. 'That's not enough.' Charles shook his head. 'I'll write him a few lines. Have you pen and ink upon you, MacLeod? I'm obliged to do so in good manners.' He scribbled rapidly:

'SIR,—I thank God I am in good health, and have got off as design'd. Remember me to all friends, and thank them for the trouble they have been at.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

JAMES THOMSON.'

MacLeod took charge of the letter, and was about to pay his last homage to the Prince, when, far away, he saw the dusky outlines of sails coming nearer and hovering about the coast. He implored the Prince to return to the shelter of the cave, or at least delay starting. 'Just now the wind blows so as to fetch them this way and to hinder your passage to the continent.'

Charles shook his head. His look was no whit



anxious or disturbed. 'Never fear, MacLeod; I'll go on board directly.' He stared over to the horizon, and added confidently, 'The wind will change immediately and make those ships steer a contrary course. Providence will take care of me, and it will not be in their power to look near me at this time.'

He stepped, light-footed, into the boat, which rowed briskly away. MacLeod, watching in intense anxiety, until the beloved face grew indistinguishable, and the upright form smaller and smaller, saw that the wind had veered to a directly opposite point, and the ships were fading out of sight. He stood with bowed head, awed by this strange fulfilment of the Prince's words. 'His Royal Highness has the Sight, for a surety,' he muttered.

His sister had supper ready for him when he returned to her house. The kitchen looked curiously empty without that bright-haired figure. She accepted unquestioningly MacLeod's explanation of her husband's and Lewie Caw's absence. They had gone to the mainland with the old Laird.

Mrs MacKinnon nodded, rocking the baby that day dandled in royal arms. 'I hope Lewie will take nae harm. There was something about that lad I liked unco well.'

Before dawn next morning the Prince and his companions had landed at Little Mallack on the south side of Loch Nevis. For three days they lurked in this wild spot, sleeping at night under the open sky. The fourth morning the small party separated. The Laird, with one of the

boatmen, went to look for a cave in which the Prince might at least spend the nights, whilst Charles, with John MacKinnon, was rowed by the remaining Highlanders up the loch along the coast. The passage was uneventful until an abrupt turn round a blind corner showed them a boat tied to a rock, and, standing on the shore, five men. The red crosses on their bonnets revealed them of the enemy. One hailed the Prince's boat, demanding peremptorily to know where they came from. John MacKinnon shouted 'From Sleat,' and muttered to the crew to row the faster. Disregarding an order to come ashore, they obeyed MacKinnon. The five militiamen promptly ran down to their craft, launched her, and came in pursuit. All this time Charles lay flat in the bottom of the boat, his yellow head comfortably supported on MacKinnon's sporran, the rest of him draped over by MacKinnon's plaid. What took place was hidden from him, but he heard the angry voices of his pursuers, and insisted excitedly that he should be put on shore. John MacKinnon refused. 'I command now, sir, and the only chance we have is to pull away, and if we are outrowed, to fire upon the fellows. We have firearms on board.'

The Prince, starting up, implored him not to take life without absolute necessity. John smiled grimly above the Prince's head. 'I will not make the attempt, sir, unless better can be; but if we are forced to come to blows, it is necessary that none get off to bear tidings.'

The plaid rose and fell with the Prince's quick breathing. 'Are they gaining, John?'

'No, sir, not a single foot on us.' MacKinnon

strained at his oar. 'The landing-place that we are sailing to is all wood, down to the water. We shall be safe if once there, because the red crosses will be afraid of being fired at from behind the trees or out of the thickets. They will be sure to sheer off for their own safety.'

Disregarding the Prince's protests and objections, John set his fellow-oarsmen so good an example that they shortly outdistanced the other boat, rounded a point, and made for the shore. Charles flung off the plaid, sprang out, and, followed by MacKinnon and the boatmen, ran, lightfooted, to the top of a hill. With thumping hearts they watched, and saw finally the disappointed militiamen returning sullenly from their useless chase.

As the boat thinned to a speck upon the water, MacKinnon fell on his knees, kissing the Prince's hands. 'Your Royal Highness is safe, God be thanked. Will you forgive me, sir, for having disobeyed you?'

The Prince raised him. 'Rather you have done well, MacKinnon. My sole reason for desiring to go ashore was that I would rather fight for my life than be taken prisoner.' He turned away his head, adding in a whisper, 'I hope God will never so far afflict the King my father, or the Duke my brother, as that I should fall alive into the hands of my enemies.'

He consented to rest, and on the hill-top, looking down over a green sea of young birch and hazel, slept for some hours. When he awakened, they returned to the boat, rocking gently at the water's edge, the patient boatmen still in her, and crossed the loch. Information

had reached the Prince that old Clanranald was near, at the house of his kinsman MacDonald of Scotus. Charles dispatched John MacKinnon thither, confidently anticipating kindness and shelter from one who had served him well before. Clanranald, he added, was to be told that the Prince did not require to see him, as he was unwilling that the old chief should run any risk on his Prince's behalf when he had not joined him, but he would think himself safe with anyone that Clanranald recommended.

The response was overwhelmingly disappointing. Clanranald, intercepted as he was bolting into the house, obviously to avoid John MacKinnon, whom he had seen in the distance approaching, grudgingly consented to a short interview in the garden. He had been against Charles's plans from the very first hours of the Prince's setting foot on Scottish soil. He himself had hitherto escaped Hanoverian vengeance, but he had seen the ruin of many a Highland dwelling; his brother was a prisoner, his own son a hunted fugitive, and he himself was unable or unwilling to do anything further to shelter or assist his King's son. 'What muckle devil has brought him to this country again?' was the old chief's wrathful exclamation on learning from John MacKinnon of Charles's return to the mainland. 'For a second destruction to it, no doubt, as the troops upon hearing of his movements will be sure to follow him fast and raze us all to the ground, leaving us nothing that they can either carry off or destroy.'

John MacKinnon did not conceal his disgust at such callous selfishness. 'I am truly aston-

ished'—he spoke coldly—'to hear a gentleman like you, Clan, talk at such a rate, when you know the Prince to be in the utmost danger, and therefore that he stands as much in need of faithful care and assistance as ever. To whom can he go for a sanctuary in distress but to friends? And must he not move about from place to place, as shall be judged most fit, for to keep him out of the hands of his enemies who are continually hunting after him?' The angry stream of Gaelic gathered spate. 'I tell you over again that he expressly desires you may not run any risk whatsoever in your own person, not even by looking him in the face, but that you may name to me any person in whose hands you would judge him to be safe. It is very hard if you will not do that much for him in his greatest danger.'

Clanranald shook his head cunningly. 'I tell you, Mr MacKinnon, that I know of no person into whose hands I can put him. But if my advice or opinion can be of any use, it is that you should return with him from whence you came, and land him speedily in the island of Rona.'

MacKinnon glared. 'Indeed, I would as soon give him instantly up to the troops as do any such thing as you advise.' He added with biting scorn: 'For you know, Clan, as well as I do, that Rona being a little grass island, not a single goat or sheep would escape a search on it, much less a man. If this be the best advice or opinion you have to give, Clan, you had better keep it to yourself, for the following of it would be to throw the Prince directly into the hands of his enemies.'

The two Highlanders confronted one another,



age-long clan feuds, ancient clan jealousies adding to the fire of their wrath. MacKinnon strode to the gate. 'I plainly see you are resolved not to do the smallest service to the Prince in his greatest distress, and that you want only to be rid of him; therefore you shall have no more trouble about him.' He paused, choking. 'But remember, sir, that I will honestly inform him of every word that has passed between you and me on this subject, be the consequence what it will.'

Charles received the news of Clanranald's rebuff better than MacKinnon had dared to hope. He shrugged his shoulders at the end of the recital, remarking philosophically, 'Well, MacKinnon, there is no help for it. We must do the best we can for ourselves.' He walked on, only his heightened colour betraying what his pride bade him shroud. 'I think I will go to Morar's house. There I am sure of a welcome.'

The house had shared the fate of many others. Enemy hands had burned it to the ground. Leaving his chief and the Prince, arrived there after innumerable alarms and fatigues, miserably contemplating the ruins of a once hospitable hearthstone, MacKinnon went to the bothy where MacDonald of Morar had found a temporary and inadequate refuge. Awakened from sleep and apprised of the Prince's advent, he hurriedly sent all with him out of the place except his wife. She was a sister of Lochiel, and staunch, as befitted a Cameron. The sight of Charles, ragged, travel-stained, reduced to such a strait, was more than she could bear calmly. She forgot the ruin of her husband and children,

the dangerous plight of her brother, the fate that had overtaken MacDonald and Cameron clansmen. She burst into a passion of tears as the Prince came forward and kissed her. Charles, embarrassed, turned from her to Morar, who was on his knees before him. Their eyes met. Did either think of long August days, tramping over heather, the Prince marching beside his Highlanders, the while Morar at his elbow repeated Charles's eager questions to the clansmen in Gaelic, and translated their replies? The wind, honey-laden, was in their faces, the lochs blue among the pines, a crown before the eyes which now saw everywhere the desolation wrought by his unwanted coming. He was very silent as he ate the unappetising food—some hurriedly-cooked salmon, without even a morsel of bread to help it down—which was all that his host could provide. Afterwards, in a cave on a bleak cliff overlooking a grey, moaning sea, the Prince slept from sheer exhaustion, but MacKinnon, awakened out of his own fatigue-drugged dozing, heard a sound of sobbing as from a heart well-nigh broken.

Morar came to them late next day, a cold, changed man. He had been in search of young Clanranald he explained, but was unable to find him. Charles, obtuse, unimaginative, merely appealed to Morar in Clanranald's stead. 'Well, Morar, there is no help for that.' He smiled brilliantly. 'You must do the best you can yourself.'

He was the Prince again, negligent, easy, the ghosts of remorse and memory driven back by

a sound sleep, his old confident assurance—somewhat shaken by Clanranald's attitude—that his friends were honoured by his seeking their aid, unimpaired. To his amazement and incredulity Morar reddened, hung his head, shifted uneasily, and finally mumbled that he was sorry to tell him he could do nothing at all for His Royal Highness, and as little did he know of anyone to whose care he could commit his person.

There was a long silence, only broken by the distant boom of waves on a white beach some way to the west. Charles paled, then coloured haughtily. For so many weeks now had he been petted and protected—one faithful friend or loyal adherent eager and ready to offer him shelter and guidance directly circumstances obliged another to give him into fresh hands—that he could scarcely credit Morar's words. When he took in their meaning, a refusal similar to old Clanranald's so recently delivered, his eyes flashed dangerously. All the humiliations and miseries of his position, dependent for food, shelter, safety, life, and liberty upon those whom his mad expedition had ruined, were brought brutally home to him by Morar's reluctance to aid. It was not this alone. Morar was plainly anxious for him to be gone from his part of Scotland, yet would lift no finger to assist his departure.

The Prince's passionate temper, lashed by wounded pride and lurking apprehensions, forced him into vehement reproaches. 'This is very hard. You was very kind yesternight, Morar, and said you could find out a hiding-place proof against all the search of the enemy's force, and

now you say you can do nothing at all for me.' The words dropped out slowly; look and tone were incredulous. 'You can travel to no place but what I will travel to. No eatables or drinkables can you take but what I can take a share along with you, and be well content with them, and even pay handsomely for them. When Fortune smiled upon me, and I had pay to give, I then found some people ready enough to serve me.' Morar flushed sullenly. 'But now that Fortune frowns on me,' Charles cried, 'and I have no pay to give, they forsake me in my necessity.' He thought, bitterly, of MacLeod's proud reluctance to dispend his thin purse of the guineas willingly given by Lady Margaret MacDonald, of Burke's honest return of scattered coins as he undressed his charge, drooping with weariness. Morar merely looked sulky and stubborn.

John MacKinnon was furious, his anger spurred by the recollection of his recent interview with old Clanranald. He broke in fiercely: 'I am persuaded, Morar, though you deny it, you have met with your betters and gotten bad counsel, otherwise you would not have changed your mind so much as you have done in so short a time. For yesterday you was as hearty as one could have wished to do everything for the preservation of the Prince, whose situation is just the same as when you left us; and as there is no change at all in his circumstances, why this sudden change in your resolutions?'

'I have neither seen young Clanranald, nor received any bad counsel in this matter.' Morar was still scowling and ungracious.

The Prince flung up his arms in a wild, despairing gesture. 'O God Almighty! Look down upon my circumstances and pity me, for I am in a most melancholy situation. Some of those who joined me at first and appeared to be fast friends now turn their backs upon me in my greatest need; and some of those again who refused to join me and stood at a distance are among my best friends. For it is remarkable that those of Sir Alexander MacDonald's following have been most faithful to me in my distress, and contributed greatly to my preservation.' The high voice broke.

There was a long, painful silence. Morar backed and shuffled. He wanted to go, but some lingering remnant of good feeling made him wait to be dismissed. Charles leaned his brow despondently against the damp wall of the cave. 'I hope, Mr MacKinnon, you will not desert me too, and leave me in the lurch, but that you'll do all for my preservation you can.' His words were choked, pleading. Mechanically he thrust out a hand, which the old chief, believing himself addressed, caught and kissed, kneeling.

'I will never leave your Royal Highness in the day of danger'—MacKinnon spoke with tears in his eyes—'but will, under God, do all I can for you, and go with you wherever you order me.'

Charles looked down with wet gaze upon the stately old man. 'Oh no.' He shook his head, speaking gently. 'That is too much for one of your advanced years, sir. I heartily thank you for your readiness to take care of me, as I am



well satisfied of your zeal for me and my Cause. But one of your age cannot well hold out with the fatigues and dangers I must undergo. It was to your friend John here, a stout young man, that I addressed myself.'

John MacKinnon was no less ready than his chief. 'With the help of God, I will go through the wide world with your Royal Highness.'

Again that strange silence fell upon the cave. The Prince, head erect, stood between the two MacKinnons, clasping a hand of each. Morar, hang-dog by the entrance, saw the swell and ripple of muscles in the long, tanned throat. 'What does your Royal Highness incline to do?' The query sounded grudging.

Charles arched haughty brows at Morar. 'That scarcely concerns you, sir, but I design to make for Borradale. My faithful old landlord, honest Angus MacDonald, will be ready enough to do all he can for me. Until now, I have ever found the MacDonalds ready to serve me.' He paused. 'I need not further trouble you, except to ask you to furnish me with a guide, Mr MacKinnon being unacquainted with the country.'

Morar, once he saw a prospect of being rid of his dangerous guest, was anxious to oblige him in minor matters. He offered the services of one of his own sons, a lad who had never seen the Prince. Charles accepted coldly. He passed out of the dank cave, his head high, his foot crushing the ferns that clustered by the entry. The evening was darkening for rain, and a moist wind came directly from the sea.

The Prince halted suddenly. 'I am exceedingly anxious to hear what they are doing in the

camp at Fort Augustus. Can you procure anyone, Morar, to go and bring intelligence from there?’

Morar cogitated. He had no intention of putting his own head into the lion's den. ‘There is a chapman hereabouts, sir, who has been in use to go and sell his wares in the camp. I have no doubt but he might be prevailed upon to go.’

Charles produced his purse and carelessly extracted a guinea. ‘Pray, give this to the fellow and dispatch him for intelligence in your name. Tell him to return as speedily as possible. *Comment?* A guinea too much, and one-half might do very well?’ The haughty young face flushed angrily at Morar's objection. ‘Well then, sir, if you think so, give him the one half and keep the other to yourself.’

Out of sight of Morar, he laid his head against MacKinnon's shoulder and burst into a passion of tears.

At dusk they started and followed a rough road across miles of peat-hags. Charles was weary and dispirited, shrinking from revisiting the scenes which had witnessed his triumphant landing on the mainland a bare year before, and then had seen him leave so stealthily not three months back for his futile wanderings through the isles. They came to Borradaile House in the uncertain summer dawn. It was a chill, damp day. A small, sullen rain was falling, making grimmer the desolation which confronted them. The house that had twice received the Prince within its hospitable rooms now stood, a pitiful skeleton of four bare walls, fire-scarred, smoke-stained, roof-

less. All around were traces of the Hanoverian incendiaries' savage work under General Campbell. The Prince waited, shivering in the wet and his thin plaid, the while John MacKinnon went in quest of the bothy where Angus MacDonald of Borradale was living with his sons. Angus came out, a scared figure habited in blankets, as MacKinnon's voice had roused him from sleep. John asked him if he had heard anything of the Prince.

Borradale shook his head. 'No. Time was that I would have given a hearty bottle to see him safe; but since I see you, I expect to hear some news of him.'

MacKinnon remembered the conduct of Clanranald and Morar. Was the Prince to meet with a third rebuff? He clenched his teeth at the thought of that slim figure standing in the drenching rain. 'I have brought him here, and will commit him to your charge.' He spoke curtly. 'I have done my duty; do you yours.'

Old Angus nodded gravely. 'I am glad of it, and shall not fail to take care of him. I shall lodge him so securely that all the forces in Britain shall not find him out.'

MacKinnon, satisfied, went back to where the Prince waited—proud, yet a suppliant. In the bothy ruffled heads and bright eyes proclaimed that Angus's sons were wakeful and eager to serve their Prince. They came running out, half-clad, grey figures in the grey, spectral, rainy morning. John MacKinnon smiled as he watched them on their knees in the mud, warm lips pressed to Charles's cold fingers. The lamp of loyalty still burned.

The Prince clung to MacKinnon at parting. 'Is it not strange to stand upon this very spot that saw my landing, and again my departure? What do you see, *mon ami*, looking out to the horizon?'

John MacKinnon was silent for a space. The Sight had come to him, and he told the vision simply. 'I see a ship, and in it your Royal Highness leaves these shores from this same spot where first you landed.' He added in Gaelic: 'For myself, I hear only the great river of Death, and the roaring is loud in my ears.'

## CHAPTER VII.

‘And Joab said unto the man that told him, And, behold, thou sawest him, and why didst thou not smite him there to the ground? and I would have given thee ten shekels of silver, and a girdle.

And the man said unto Joab, Though I should receive a thousand shekels of silver in mine hand, yet would I not put forth mine hand against the king’s son.’

*The Second Book of Samuel.*

AND now began the most dangerous and hair-breadth of the Prince’s adventures and escapes. He had bade farewell to the islands, but on the mainland still worse hazards and perils awaited him. For the time he was surrounded by faithful friends. The two sons of MacDonald of Borradale, Ranald and John Óg, had both held commissions in Clanranald’s regiment, while another brother had fallen at Culloden. All were staunch, and in the poor shieling, which had been the family dwelling-place since the destruction of their home, Charles found shelter and care. From the shore a great cliff, so steep as to be in some parts almost perpendicular, rose up towards Borradale. In a cleft between two rocks, the bothy, artfully roofed by green turf, looked from any vessel in the bay to be part of the brae. Little did Charles reckon that on board one of the enemy ships anchored in Lochnanuagh was his faithful friend John MacKinnon, captured at Ellagol on his return home. MacKinnon was permitted to



walk on deck, and many a time his gaze travelled, heavy hearted, to the very spot where his Prince was lurking. The warm, wet winds, laden with the reek of peat, fanned him to sleep, and kindly faces were all around. At times the fair head was bowed with dumb misery for the ruin that his rash exploit had brought about, but on the whole the hours passed peacefully enough, for Charles was not imaginative, and few ghosts troubled his sleep o' nights.

After three days, Angus MacDonald spoke cautiously of the Prince's plans. Did His Royal Highness incline to remain? Charles shook his head. 'I have written a letter to your nephew Glenaladale, well known to me before on account of his service as major in Clanranald's regiment, commanding his attendance. I wish to concert with him measures for my safety.'

'My son John shall be your express, sir.'

The Prince stood in the doorway of the sheiling, watching John's bright tartans out of sight. He was humming softly to himself, a little indeterminate French air, when Ranald MacDonald approached. Charles saw from his face that he brought bad news. 'What is it? What is it?' he cried quickly.

'The old Laird of MacKinnon has been made a prisoner, sir, at Morar's bothy.'

A shiver ran over the Prince's frame. 'Then who is safe? Ranald, I dare not linger here. Where can you take me?'

Ranald's smooth young brow was corrugated with anxious thought. 'There is a cave four miles east from here, sir, nearly inaccessible, and known to very few of the country people. Your

Royal Highness can lie hidden there until my cousin Glenaladale comes.'

Charles agreed with eagerness. The cave, small, but deep, high up in a precipitous cliff face, sheltered him from rain and wind, and still better, from musket-shot or red-coat. His hard, anxious young eyes had little thought to spare for the beauty of the scene below him: glistening sands of pure white, leading out to a sea of blue and opal, encircling far-away dream islands. The loveliness of nature was only a trap in which lurked menace and danger.

At night Angus MacDonald met his nephew, Glenaladale, a tall man of three-and-thirty, white-lipped yet from barely-healed wounds taken at Culloden, heart-sick for the wife and children whom he had had to leave defenceless. His cattle were stolen, his tenants maltreated and burned out, but it never crossed the loyal, single heart to hesitate to come to the defeated one who was the cause of all these miseries. Through the darkness he made his way painfully to the cave where Ranald, sentinel outside, challenged him sharply, then, recognising him, brought him thankfully to Charles.

The Prince held him in his arms. 'Eh, my dear, my dear, but you are welcome. And they tell me that those accursed men of Cumberland's wounded you.'

'It is nothing, sir.' Glenaladale kissed Charles's hands. 'If only your Royal Highness were in safety!'

Charles was far from being safe, as the next morning proved. A ragged Highlander arrived, bearing a letter for old Angus. He brought it to

the Prince, simply bidding him read it. Charles knew the writer, Angus MacEachine, Borradale's son-in-law, whose hut had sheltered him when sick with fatigue after the toilsome journey on foot from Glen Pean to the Braes of Morar. He could smell again its musty atmosphere, see as in a dream the faces of Burke and O'Sullivan bent over him, feel the kindly hands that cared for his wearied body. The letter told briefly that the Prince's presence was whispered about in the country. It would be highly dangerous for him to remain in the neighbourhood, and Angus MacEachine had prepared a safer place in which to hide him.

Charles, tentatively accepting the offer, sent Ranald MacDonald to view this proposed refuge, and dispatched John to reconnoitre the sea-shore. John returned with news that he saw the whole coast surrounded by war-ships, and a large military force was about the country. The imminent danger sent the Prince, panic-stricken, to Glen Morar, without waiting for Ranald's reappearance and report. On their way the small party—the Prince, Borradale, Glenaladale, and John MacDonald—came across Angus MacEachine. Young Clanranald, the new-comer explained, was only a few miles off, and had secured a safe refuge for the Prince. Charles pouted a little at being obliged to receive aid from one whose father had so lately shown disrespect, if not disloyalty, but was obliged to acquiesce in the proposal. The increasing darkness compelled them to halt at Meoble for the night. Next day, Charles declared, he would send for young Clanranald.

He never saw the young man again until they met at Borradale on the eve of sailing for France. In the wild glen of Morar news greeted them that six men-of-war, filled with troops under General Campbell, had anchored in Loch Nevis, on the very spot where the Prince had landed a few days previously. Charles dispatched two Highlanders to watch and report the enemy's movements, but before their return, Angus MacDonald, who had gone some distance in quest of food, came back, empty-handed. His face was as grave as the bad tidings which it portended. The dreaded Captain Scott, with his force, had come to Arisaig from Glengarry's country. Clanranald's land was now encircled on every side by the foe. It was equally impossible to reach young Clanranald, or for him to join them. The danger of remaining where he was became plain to those who guarded the Prince. A line of camps and sentries, twenty-seven in all, had been placed between the head of Loch Eil and the head of Loch Hourn, the news that the Prince had landed in Moidart having evidently leaked out. The only available course left him was to make his way as rapidly as he could in a northeasterly direction, outdistancing the advancing soldiers, if possible cutting through the cordon, and to take refuge in any undiscovered retreat that offered. Unwillingly Charles parted with Angus MacDonald and his son-in-law, begging them to communicate his departure to young Clanranald, should they meet, and set off determinedly into the heart of wild, inaccessible mountain scenery. He was companioned by Glenaladale, Glenaladale's brother John, and John

MacDonald. All four were silent, watchful, wary, fiercely determined to sell their lives dearly, should things come to such a pass.

High noon, the sun glaring out of a pitiless sky, saw the Prince and his three companions on the top of Scoorvuy. Here a hasty meal was eaten, and fresh plans concerted. Glenaladale's brother—at least the fourth John MacDonald whom the Prince had cause to remember with gratitude—was dispatched to Glenfinnan to gather what intelligence he could of events there, and to bring back two clansmen, left by Glenaladale as guards over his estate. The three were to meet the Prince at ten o'clock that night on the side of Scoorwick Corrichan, whose three thousand feet of motionless majesty rose to the clouds between Loch Arkaig and Loch Morar.

Directly MacDonald had set out, after kissing the Prince's hand and murmuring passionate words of devotion, the rest started likewise. An hour and a half later they found themselves on the top of another mountain, the Heather Hill, called in the Gaelic Fraoch Bheinn. Charles flung his slim, tired length down on the purple carpet, and lay with his cheek supported on one hand. His look was moody and abstracted. From his resting-place he could stare below and see the fair spot where only eleven months before he had unfurled the standard of his house. Before his eyes gathered a company of ghosts, the more piteous that he knew not the fate which had befallen many. Where was the Duke of Athol, bravely bearing the weight of flag and staff? What had chanced to Lochiel, who had marched



proudly, yet companioned by misgiving even then, at the head of his stately Camerons? Where were the clansmen themselves, who had listened in simple bewilderment to his own promises and prophecies of victory and success? He had tried to shut his ears to grisly whispers of the fate of most, butchered at Culloden, lurking, starved and broken, in glen and mountain, or languishing, naked, famished, chained, in the bowels of foul-smelling ships, and between the merciless walls of English prisons. The very air, midge-haunted, 'bee-loud,' seemed to ring with the spectre acclamations from the throats of those who had cheered their king's son on that fated 19th of August. 'Their blood is on my head, and yet, when I came over, did I ever dream of this? I would have led them to London, had not I been forced to turn back. Is my fate kinder? Am not I, like so many, fugitive, hunted, a price upon my life far greater than their miserable lives? When I forced the captured English soldiers to witness my first triumph here, could I foresee that they would one day hunt me like a fox near the same spot? My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?'

His bitter reverie was broken into by the sight of a dark moving object passing across the landscape at some distance. The Prince and John MacDonald of Borradale crouched in the heather, whilst Glenaladale went to investigate. The disturbance turned out to be a drove of cattle which Glenaladale's tenants were hurriedly removing, to prevent their seizure by the enemy. Glenaladale brought back the unwelcome information that at least seven hundred troops were in occupation of

the route that the Prince had proposed to travel. A new plan of campaign had to be thought of without delay.

Charles, meeting this fresh, unexpected hazard with the high courage which had aided him through innumerable vicissitudes, directed that Glenaladale should dispatch one messenger to recall his brother and the two guards, and another in quest of Donald Cameron of Glen Pean, whose house had once before sheltered his Prince. Donald was lurking on an adjacent hill, to which he had removed himself and his property at the troops' approach. His local knowledge would be of inestimable service as guide, if he could be prevailed upon to undertake the task. In the meanwhile there was nothing to be done except await the return of both clansmen from their errands. Charles lay in the heather, now obstinately turning his back upon the vista of blue loch and towering, enfolding mountains, but his eyes were alert to discern a woman's figure toiling up the hill.

She proved to be the wife of one of Glenaladale's tenants. News of his presence had crept from croft and sheiling, quick with pity for his plight. She carried a pailful of foaming, newly-drawn milk, grateful to the dry throats of men huddled for hours on a sun-scorched eminence, but Glenaladale was apprehensive lest in one of his companions she should discover the Prince. Charles was eyeing the pail thirstily. He had hastily shrouded his head in a handkerchief, under pretence of headache, and his faded, shrunken attire fortunately led the woman to regard him as Glenaladale's servant. When she had been sent off, after an orgy of lamentations,

blessings, and prognostications, Glenaladale was able to give the Prince the milk. Nectar could have tasted no sweeter to the parched creature, gulping greedily. He had barely finished before the messenger from Glenfinnan returned. He reported himself as having been unable to find either John MacDonald or the two guards. Other disquieting news was the arrival of a hundred of the Argyllshire militia at the very foot of the hill where the Prince lurked.

Charles refused to be downcast. They must rest, and set out afresh about sunset. No, no, no, he would not wait for Donald Cameron. He slept a little, watched in turn by the other two, and woke to find a white, spectral haar coming up from the loch, veiling everything. Through its cold and clammy protection the three fugitives pushed on, making good progress. It was about eleven at night when, in toiling up a hollow, rutted way between two hills, they heard the ring of footsteps coming out of the mist. John MacDonald drew the Prince aside, and they crouched behind a great boulder, the while Glenaladale walked forward and challenged the new-comer. Their talk was inaudible to the two, waiting in painful anxiety, but at length Glenaladale returned, relieved and smiling. 'Providence is indeed watching over you, sir,' he cried.

Charles caught at Glenaladale's hands. 'Who is it, *mon ami*?'

'Donald Cameron of Glen Pean, sir. May I bring him to your Royal Highness?'

Donald Cameron had not wasted his opportu-

nities. He had learned narrowly how and where the enemy had placed themselves, and cheerfully agreed to guide the Prince past the sentries. Under his direction the small party continued their way, toiling steadily along roads that even in daylight were nearly impassable. The Prince stumbled and slipped, thankful to borrow an arm of Glenaladale or John MacDonald, both sure-footed Highlanders used to these wild tracks, but no word of complaint left his lips. Towards dawn the mist thinned, lifted, drew off before the shafts of sun that drove it away to wander in spectral wreaths about the dim, pointing summits of inaccessible mountains. The morning was clear and silent, broken only by the voice of much water, hidden yet incessant, or the shrill cry of a bird as it passed overhead. Four o'clock found the fugitives on the top of Mamnyn Callum, a high hill in the brae of Loch Arkaig. It had been searched by the soldiery the previous day, so that a second combing of it seemed unlikely. Here for hours Charles slept the sleep of the exhausted, watched in turns by his friends. When he awoke, a mile away he could see red dots moving, the camp of the enemy, who little surmised that the quarry which they hunted so diligently and so remorselessly was lying in the heather watching them. It was a still, drowsy day of windless heat and strange peace. The Prince dozed and roused, to doze again, for even his strong body was wearied out by the long march, toiling doggedly over appalling routes and up scandalous tracks all the night, sustained only by spring water and the coarse oatmeal and butter that Donald Cameron had carried.

Once the latter drew the Prince's attention to some cattle being shepherded rapidly across the landscape by a number of men. 'Does your Royal Highness see that? Yonder are they driving away my cattle.'

Charles frowned. 'How many cattle may you have? Five hundred or four hundred?'

'No, not so many.' Donald calculated solemnly. 'Only about two or three hundred.'

A slim, scratched hand came down on his shoulder. 'I am sorry to see this.' The Prince's voice was moved, sympathetic. 'But keep up a good heart, Donald. I hope to see you yet taking five for one from the Campbells.'

The sole alarm throughout the day was occasioned by the sight of a man climbing the hill. Donald Cameron went to intercept him, but to the fugitives' surprise and joy he proved to be none other than Glenaladale's brother, who had wandered, all-unknowing, to the very spot where the Prince chanced to be. Charles ran recklessly to meet him. 'But it is good to see you safe, my friend,' he cried. 'We had all given you over for lost. Come and share my heather couch, and tell us of what has befallen since you and I parted.'

The sun had dropped out of sight behind the mountains, and a cool wind was springing up. The long, light dusk of a northern summer crept healingly about the parched and arid landscape. Glenaladale drew the Prince's plaid round His Royal Highness, for after sunset the midge-infested air could hang sharp and chill. About nine o'clock they started once more, some four hours' travelling bringing them to Corrinagaull,



lying on the edge of Lochiel's territory. Donald Cameron had hoped to procure provisions from some fugitive clansman, for they had almost entirely exhausted their small stock of butter and oatmeal, and cooking in the daytime was inadvisable, as a fire might attract the enemy's attention. The Prince waited with the two John MacDonalds, whilst Glenaladale and Donald Cameron started for some huts which they anticipated finding occupied. Shut doors and silence confronting them, they returned, empty-handed, and the whole party walked on for another mile. A temporary halt was made in a deep crevice high up on the rocky side of a hill; below, a pale loch lay between its frame of boulders and heather. After a brief, much-needed rest Glenaladale and Cameron went off again in quest of food, leaving the other two to guard the Prince. Charles slept soundly, and woke to hear his companions talking in low voices. Sunrise and daylight had revealed the unwelcome presence of a camp at the head of the loch. The familiar and hated red-coats were seen moving about, and the smoke of a fire drifted lazily up into the blue. Charles, nervous and hungry, nevertheless elected to remain where he was until Glenaladale and Donald Cameron returned from their expedition. They reappeared within an hour, bearing nothing more substantial or appetising than two minute cheeses, and the disquieting news that soldiers were coming up the other side of the hill, probably in pursuit of any unfortunate country-people who might have taken shelter there.

The five looked at one another. Charles,

having eaten one cheese, held out his hand for the second, observing calmly : ' This is unlucky, gentlemen, but I incline to remain here. At night we will travel, and, if possible, break through their line of camps.'

The start was made at twilight, under a lemon sky. A slice of moon was pasted against it like a halved plate, and a wind, moaning of coming rain, whispered in fir and birch. They pushed on until night enveloped everything, and only the unwelcome glowing red eye of a camp-fire proclaimed human presence other than their own. They halted, hearing plainly across the black silence the voice of a sentry challenging his companion. They panted up the steep ascent of Drimachosi, from the top of which a second redness showed far down in the dark. There was another camp at the very foot of the hill, exactly where the Prince must descend.

They crawled noiselessly downwards. Dark forms passed beneath the fire and the watchers. Two sentries halted to talk, their voices, eerie, their words, indistinguishable, drifting to the listeners. Donald Cameron had proposed that he should make the experiment of passing between the two sentries himself. ' If I succeed, and return safe, then your Royal Highness may venture, and I shall conduct you.' Crawling westward, they reached the channel of a burn, and crept through it on hands and knees. For one second the backs of the sentinels were turned. The fugitives seized the moment and quietly slipped between them.

The danger from the enemy was so near and

pressing that Charles had grown careless of it in any other form. As they toiled forward, Donald Cameron leading the way, the Prince following, with Glenaladale and the two John MacDonalds immediately behind, the sound of water, gushing through the dark, startled them. A small, swift offshoot of a greater stream was in their path, disappearing in a ghostly fall over the edge of a precipitous descent whose depth it was impossible to fathom in the black night. Donald Cameron, sure-footed, keen-sighted, crossed in safety. The Prince, next in line, missed a step, and but that Cameron caught a royal arm and jerked him into safety with the other hand, at the same time calling to Glenaladale, who came speedily to the rescue, the hopes of the Stuarts would have lain with a broken body on the wet stones of a Highland glen.

The worst peril was over, but they were still not far from the line of camps. At any moment they might be challenged by a patrol, or spied by some keen-eyed sentry. They pushed on in a north-easterly direction as rapidly as darkness and bad travelling made permissible, forded a river, and by daybreak arrived at Corriscorridill at the head of Loch Hourn. They were wearied out and almost starving as they flung themselves down by the side of a lean ravine high up in the mountain-face. Long, straggling heather and young birch bushes grew nearly over it. Charles's fatigue and exhaustion found vent in sighing. The question of provisions was a serious one, little cheese remaining; but John MacDonald of Borradaile produced a nap-

kinful of oatmeal, at which the haggard faces brightened surprisingly. 'Come, come'—Charles was trembling with eagerness—'let us, in God's name, have a share. Never were people in more need.' He covered his slice of cheese with oatmeal, washing down the dry fare with water from the stream. His hunger and that of his companions in a measure appeased, heart-eased, they fell to chatting and laughing. It was another still day, the absence of wind and cloud promising great heat. Above their heads the sky was flawless blue, and at their feet a burn ran between slim birches and great cushions of heather. All around the mountains were tall and dim, telling their secrets to none.

The day went by until the cool of evening gave the wanderers courage to take up their pilgrimage afresh. A guide was a necessity, as Donald Cameron frankly confessed his ignorance of the country where the Prince proposed to go, and the rest were in a similar plight. Glenaladale and Donald Cameron ventured out to look for someone who would undertake to act as pilot, but after a few minutes' absence, returned to the Prince. Within a cannon-shot (no great distance then) they had seen two small camps, and watched soldiers from these driving some sheep into an enclosure and selecting a few for eating. Charles sighed. '*Hélas!* and we shall not be invited to share their dinner. Roast mutton is monstrous good.' He was silent for a moment. 'We must wait until dusk, *mes amis*, and then make our way across the hills to Glenshiel in Seaforth's country.

The night proved to be one of the darkest yet encountered. No friendly moon came to break the clouds' monotony, and the way itself was toilsome in the extreme. Charles was soaked with stumbling across torrents, bruised by collisions with boulders, nerve-racked after a thousand groundless alarms and apprehensions, by the time that they came to Glenshiel near sunrise.

The promise of heat lent by a still sky and strengthening sun was quickly fulfilled. July 22nd grew to be one of the hottest days which the Prince had yet experienced. He spent it, panting, in a corrie on a mountain-side, fringed with stunted birch and hazel. Glenaladale and John MacDonald of Borradale had ventured to an adjacent village in quest of food, and returned bearing the only eatables available: a stone of cheese and half the same quantity of butter. The famishing five devoured the crude provisions thankfully, but soon discovered that moderation would have served them better. Both cheese and butter were so intensely salt that raging thirst tormented them, increased by the tantalising voice of the river which raced and foamed through the glen below. The Prince sternly forbade any man to leave their shelter in order to slake his thirst. The air was sultry; the corrie, despite overhanging trees and projecting boulders, resembled a furnace. He thought of another king, who craved the living water from the well of Bethlehem, of the last Jacobite struggle (until his own ill-starred attempt to mend the fortunes of his broken and decayed dynasty) near this very spot—Glen Shiel—twenty-seven years before. He grieved in his



shallow fashion at parting from Donald Cameron, who, now that his services as guide were at an end, was anxious to make his way back to his wife and family. A Glengarry lad—one Donald MacDonald—whose father had been murdered by the military a few days before, and who had fled from Glengarry to Glenshiel to escape a similar fate, was encountered by Glenaladale on his way for provisions. Some talk revealed that the youth had served in the Prince's army. Admitted into the secret of the Prince's presence near by, he cheerfully undertook the task of guide in Donald Cameron's stead. Some idea of going to Poolewe was abandoned on learning that a French ship reported there had sailed. The party resolved to make for Glenmoriston at sunset. After slaking their thirst with vast quantities of river water and some goats' milk, brought by a man named M'Kra for Glenaladale's use, the donor little suspecting that royal lips would drink it, they set out once more. It was a night of shadows, the world languid after the day's heat.

They had trudged a bare quarter of a mile when Glenaladale, with an exclamation, missed his sporran. In it reposed the purse which contained the Prince's remaining store of money—all the party possessed to buy them food. After vociferous argument and recrimination, he recalled laying it on the ground when paying the boy who brought the milk. Could he have stolen it? 'I must return and search, sir.' The Highlander's voice shook. 'That money was all that your Royal Highness has to depend on. Oh, curse on my carelessness!'

‘It might have happened to any one of us. No, no, *mon cher*, you must not return. It is unwise, unsafe, as well as useless.’ Charles was vehement in his prohibition. ‘I forbid it!’

Glenaladale turned a dark brow upon the Prince. ‘For this once I judge best to disobey you, sir. Is your Royal Highness to starve through my fault?’

Charles shrugged his shoulders. ‘Forty *louis d’or* and five shillings in silver! Shall I send you back to risk your life for that?’

Glenaladale, with MacDonald of Borradale, went off stubbornly, leaving Charles to the care of his brother and Donald MacDonald. They waited behind a rock, the night-wind breathing round them, while water, languid and tired, slipped past stones and over low-lying rocks. None of the three spoke much, but their thoughts and their prayers went after the other two. Suddenly John MacDonald touched the Prince’s arm. ‘Crouch down, sir. I see an officer and two private men under him. Look! They are taking the road that your Royal Highness designed to travel.’

The Prince gasped. ‘If they should meet our friends——’

John MacDonald bowed his head. ‘Better that than that your Royal Highness should have taken that way and been seized by them.’

Charles’s face was awed. ‘I think Providence has watched over me very much to-day. If my enemies had not pursued this poor lad here’—he smiled brilliantly at the boy, who gazed up at him worshipfully—‘I had wanted a guide; and if Glenaladale’s purse had not been lost, thus

delaying us, while he returned to seek it, we had assuredly fallen in with that officer and his men.' He bit his lip. 'If only Glenaladale and John have not been intercepted by them.'

The return of his friends, after a long, anxious wait, relieved Charles's fears. They had taken another road, and as they approached, proudly waved aloft the missing purse. Glenaladale had found it, as he surmised, on the spot where he had laid it down, but the gold was gone from it. A wrathful visit to the home of the boy who had brought the milk eventuated in an irate interview with the young thief's father. He threatened his promising offspring with hanging if he did not restore the money, 'all these poor gentlemen had.' The terrified urchin, judging from the two Highlanders' grim faces that they would see the sentence carried out, tremblingly confessed, and disinterred the money from the safe place where he had cunningly buried it. They had returned as speedily as they could, seeing nothing of the officer and his men, but their cheeks paled at the realisation of the Prince's peril.

Charles was overjoyed with his own and his friends' escape. 'Glenaladale, my hour, I see, is not come, for I believe I should not be taken though I had a mind to it.'

The reunited travellers resumed their journey, and by walking across moorland for the rest of the night, arrived in the early morning on a hill-side above Strathclunie. The Prince was tired out, but, although equally weary, the others would take no rest until they had made what poor provision they could for his comfort. It was a

warm, calm day, with swarms of midges dancing in the still air. Charles curled up in a hollow, well wrapped in his plaid to keep off these officious creatures which recalled disagreeably the hours of torment endured on a Hebridean rock with Neil MacEachain for company and fellow-sufferer. The plaid proving only inadequate protection, he submitted to be covered with long stalks of heather. The rest, similarly afflicted, took what repose they could, to the accompaniment of the Prince's muffled groans. The trying hours crawled by, until a little wind got up, bringing faint relief. Travelling was resumed in the afternoon, uneventful save for hearing sounds of firing from a hill overhead. They made towards the north, trudging steadily through heavy-falling rain. Night, dark and brooding, found them on the top of a tall hill between Strathglass and Glenmoriston. The very moon was hidden, and slow, immense clouds, laden with moisture, hung dank and distressing. Shelter of a kind was afforded by a cave, but it was so low, small, and narrow that the Prince could neither lie down nor sit with any comfort. They had no means of lighting a fire, so he smoked, contentedly enough, to keep himself warm.

There were seven men who landed one dancing July day with a Stuart Prince on a little beach of fairy-white sand. Their names go down to posterity as the Seven Men of Moidart, but few, save diligent searchers of old records, care about the Seven Men of Glenmoriston. They have had mud flung at them, as outlaws, robbers,

cattle-lifters, rascals. Look under the outer covering of coarse plaid and sun-tanned skins for the seven most faithful hearts that beat for Bonnie Prince Charlie.

Glenaladale was frank in his confession of ignorance as to the part of the country which they had now reached. It was the young guide who spoke of these seven notable Highlanders, the Glenmoriston men, driven to bitter reprisals against the Duke of Cumberland's blood-stained soldiery. They, once honest farmers and small tacksmen, all of whom had served in the Prince's army, were now banded together in a cave near the head of Coire Agrainge, their hands against every man's hand. After some discussion it was decided to send to ask these men if they would shelter a fugitive Jacobite and conduct him to Poolewe. No word was spoken of the Prince. The refugee was hinted to be young Clanranald. A cordial offer of hospitality came back, which brought Charles and his small company at once to the cave. Ere they reached it, three of the outlaws emerged from it, the remainder having gone afield in unlawful quest of provisions. In the bright head, covered with a white nightcap and an old bonnet, one of them recognised the proud young leader who had many times reviewed his army in the days of past triumph. Charles was a sorry figure by this, clad in a dark coat of coarse cloth, a worn tartan vest, a plaid, and tartan hose. His brogues, or what was left of them, were tied to his feet with thongs. His remaining shirt was the colour of saffron, and concealed at the throat by a grimy handkerchief.



It was a strange encounter. All about them rose the everlasting mountains and the green and golden tapestry of a Highland summer. Both were tattered, hunted, but unbroken in pride and courage. John MacDonald, the outlaw, his lean face first paling under its tan, then reddening furiously, spoke in Gaelic, sobbing over the extended hands. 'I am sorry to see you in such a poor state, and hope, if I live, to see you in a better condition, as I have seen you before at the head of your army upon the Green of Glasgow. All I can do is to continue faithful to you while I live; and I am willing to leave my wife and children, and follow you wherever you incline going.'

Glenaladale translated the words. The Prince smiled and took the speaker's hand. 'As you are a MacDonald, whom I always found faithful to my Cause, I shall admit you to my small party, and trust myself to you.' He added, with the old graciousness: 'If ever it should be my lot to enjoy my own, you may depend upon of being equally rewarded.'

Glenaladale interposed. 'This is well, MacDonald, but what of your comrades?'

Charles, understanding the tone rather than the actual import of the question, murmured, 'Swear them to secrecy, *mon ami*. I know that I can trust them.'

Glenaladale spoke to the men in their own tongue. They held up their dirks, and the sun glinted on the bare steel as the dreadful words of the oath, repeated after him, rolled forth. 'That their backs should be to God and their faces to the Devil; that all the curses the Scriptures

did pronounce might come upon them and all their posterity if they did not stand firm to the Prince in the greatest dangers, and if they should discover to any person—man, woman, or child—that the Prince was in their keeping, till once his person should be out of danger.’

The harsh voices, murmuring the harsh sounds, ceased. The dazzle of sun on steel died as the dirks slid home into their rude sheaths. The Prince crossed himself and said, ‘I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.’

On a heather bed, with a merry little stream (‘the best water in the Highlands,’ one of the outlaws called it) talking near, the Prince spent the first luxurious night for many days. The cave was commodious, and ample food, into the procuring of which he did not inquire too closely, provided. The oath of secrecy and fidelity had been taken by the rest of the seven on their return. Charles was eager to bind himself and Glenaladale by similar promises to stand by them in danger to the last drop of blood, but the robbers refused. The Prince laughed. ‘You are the first Privy Council that has been sworn to me since the battle of Culloden.’ His look grew dreamy. ‘I shall never forget you or yours.’

Glenaladale, not without some apprehension as to how the Prince would take it, translated the reply. ‘They say, sir, that a priest who used to come among them in their own country has frequently told them that King Charles the Second after his restoration was not very mindful of his friends.’

The Prince shook his head. ‘I am heartily

sorry for that, but I hope I myself will not follow the same measure, and that they may depend upon my word as the word of a Prince.' His chin lifted haughtily. Any distrust of his glamorous future projects touched him as a spur a galled horse. Boisdale had said something of the kind when he visited Charles at Coradale. An ancestor who had fought in seven battles for the Merry Monarch was not received at Court, he complained. 'If I come home, the case would be otherwise with me.' The Prince could hear his own voice, gay, triumphant, ringing out as they sat drinking and chaffing. He shivered suddenly. Would he ever come home? Was he to leave his bones in this land where he had known incredible hardships and undying faithfulness?

## CHAPTER VIII.

'My friend should meet me somewhere hereabout  
To take me to that hiding in the hills.

I find hard rocks, hard life, hard cheer, or none,  
For I am emptier than a friar's brains;  
But God is with me in this wilderness,  
These wet black passes and foam-churning chasms--  
And God's free air, and hope of better things.

Who comes?

A thousand marks are set upon my head.  
Friend?—foe perhaps—a tussle for it then!  
Nay, but my friend. Thou art so well disguised,  
I knew thee not. Hast thou brought bread with thee?  
I have not broken bread for fifty hours. . . .  
No bread. My friends await me yonder? Yes?  
Lead on then. *Up* the mountain? Is it far?  
Not far. Climb first and reach me down thy hand.'

*Sir John Oldcastle.*

THE great pageant of summer was passing in slow majesty from Scotland. Already, although only mid-August, the landscape had begun to take on that unmistakable yellow tinge across its prevailing ripe green which is the forerunner of autumn and decay. The grain was tall and wind-tossed, singing its own sad music as it bent and rustled. In another month the high stooks would lean about the corn-fields, but Scotland's hairst that year—Tearlach's year—was sown in tears and blood. At nights the wind had a chill in its breath that promised winter and the hiding under snow of all green things. In between

periods of rain and strong gales there were days of blue and calm, but those who companioned the hunted Prince knew that his life of lurking and hardship could not continue indefinitely. The first fury of destruction and pillage of the harmless peasantry was abating a little, but the Government's relentless pursuit of the leader of the short-lived Rising was still remorselessly continued. Although Kingston's Horse had gone from Fort Augustus at the end of July, the militia captain, Campbell, was as near to the fugitives as four miles' distance at the beginning of August. The following day found Charles and his companions at a sheiling hut in the country of the Chisholms. He was pushing northward, Poolewe his ultimate objective, as he confidently anticipated receiving help from French vessels reported to be lingering there. The Glenmoriston men, their number reinforced by another, bringing it to eight, were with him still, as well as Glenaladale and the two John MacDonalds. He travelled through wild, wonderful country, the velvet sides of towering mountains a changing patchwork of marvellous greens as the sun shifted hourly past them, and the voice of great waters sounding an organ-note in nature's orchestra. The rowans hung brave and scarlet as a red-coat's hated livery. The tops of tall woods were turning to gold. The Prince was rested in body, strengthened in nerve, by good food and a week's care in the outlaws' secret grottoes. He had fallen in easily with their simple way of living, taking his turn at cooking the meat for dinner, chattering to them of the king, the French court, his brother Henry, whom he praised with sparkling eyes. On



Lammas Day, at Charles's orders, the whole company toasted the French Princess of the night-dark beauty, vowing that if she were with them, they would guard her as they guarded the Prince. Charles laughed, well pleased. His Gaelic was still limited and stumbling, their English practically non-existent, but Glenaladale acted as interpreter for both parties, to their mutual content.

Charles was still insistent that the French would send him succours. This stubborn belief continued even after the messengers dispatched to Poolewe returned. They brought information that the only French ship which had touched there had sailed again, but two French officers on board had landed and were making for Lochiel's country in search of the Prince. Charles's spirits soared. They had evidently brought him news of great importance, no doubt concerning a French landing. He was weary with travelling over the rough tracks of unfrequented moor-roads, of hiding in woods and decaying sheilings, but nevertheless insisted upon returning to the Braes of Glenmoriston forthwith.

The night was dark, voiceless, moonless. The whole party forded Cannich Water, and walked with grim courage past young Chisholm's house. It stood aloof and sleeping, but all drew freer breath once its dour, unlighted shape had been left behind. At two o'clock, dawn beginning to thin the sky's impenetrable curtain of black beyond the mountains, they halted at Fasnacoill. Here they found shelter for three days in a dense wood, none about the neighbourhood suspecting how near thirty thousand pounds lay for their

taking. A messenger, sent to discover the movements of troops in search of the Prince, brought back the welcome intelligence that these had returned to the camp at Fort Augustus. Charles, considerably heartened, set out afresh, and by taking the least frequented way found himself again in Glenmoriston after some four hours' travel. The day was spent on a hill-top, and the journey resumed in the evening under a grey sky flecked with cloud. A mile onwards news met them of another party of military having been sent to scour the Braes of Glengarry in pursuit of the Prince. The rest of the night was passed in a near-by sheiling hut, with the wind sighing through crevices in the roof, and stars looking in at the low entry where the door swung crookedly from one hinge.

Charles was silent, brooding over the enforced halt in his journey. He had been eager to go on, but the outlaws were of opinion that it was highly unsafe. He condescended to argue with them, then haughtily gave his orders. He designed to proceed forthwith. They answered that they refused to let him. The proud, arched brows went up. *Comment? They refused?* It was a new thing for the Prince to be obliged to receive orders from his servants. Glenaladale reluctantly translated the answer. If the Prince did not immediately listen to their counsel they would leave him. They knew the country best, and the dangers which might befall him. He was to take some food and rest, and remain where he was as long as they judged it advisable. Charles was furious. The old stubborn temper flashed forth. As they would not obey him,

he should neither eat nor drink. He sat there, glowering at them, immovable as the rocks which strewn their journey. The return threat was none too palatable for being true. If he refrained from food, he would only turn faint, and if there were danger he would find himself in no condition to escape or fight. It was necessary that he should eat and sleep. Charles sullenly gave way, grumbling between bites of bannock—his anger had not impaired his appetite—: ‘I find kings and princes must be ruled by their privy council, but I believe there is not in all the world a more absolute privy council than what I have at present.’ The blunt announcement that they would rather tie him up than let him proceed reddened the fair skin under its sunburn. He withdrew, with the pretence of sleeping, but he was still defiant and mistrustful.

At midnight he wakened, tears wet upon his cheeks, crying that he had dreamed fearfully of bloody axes and a great crowd. They soothed him, laughing it aside as but a dream.

London had enjoyed a rare treat that day. The two rebel lords, Balmerino and Kilmarnock, had suffered on Tower Hill. The Marquis of Tullibardine, who styled himself the Duke of Athol, had meanly disappointed the town of a similar spectacle by dying in the Tower before he could even be tried. There was an immense audience, eager to enjoy a fine, free entertainment. Later there would be plenty of executions of common fellows who had been in this wicked and unnatural rebellion, but it was seldom that two peers lost their heads.

The fugitives woke next day to find the world wrapped in clammy fog. It shrouded tree-trunks and mountain-sides, and sent its wet chill through ragged garments and leaking brogues. A spy dispatched to investigate and report brought back word in the afternoon that the way was clear. The pursuing party had returned to their camp after an abortive chase. The Prince and his nine companions—Glenaladale, his brother, John MacDonald of Borradaile, and six of the Glenmoriston men, the remaining two having been sent to Loch Arkaig in quest of Cameron of Clunes—set out with caution in a dank, semi-dark world of mist, through Glenmoriston and Glenlyne. The thick moisture in the air soon changed to torrential rain, which fell for hours in slanting sheets. Late at night they heard the roar of the Garry, swollen to a dangerous height. Two of the party experimented carefully, and reported that it would be possible to wade across, although the river was up to their waists. The rest plunged in, including the Prince, whose mind was darkened by bitter memories of the foaming Esk, and the Highlanders, reaching the far side, dancing to dry themselves. All around was formless blackness, broken only by the brawling water as it raced and swirled past tree-roots and half-submerged rocks. Once safely across, they stumbled on for another mile, halting at length on a dour hill-side. There was no cover, and they huddled there in the pouring rain until daybreak, when it still fell steadily. Once more the Prince set out, unrefreshed, ravenous, saturated to the skin, to toil doggedly across scowling hills and rough moorland, crusted with soaked patches of

heather, to the Brae of Achnasual. A roofless hut, where the rain dripped as heavily inside as it fell without, received them, and the dreary, comfortless hours crawled by. The mountains were blotted from sight, the surrounding landscape seen through a grey veil of smiting water, and no message of any kind reached them from Clunes. They had used up their small stock of provisions. The neighbourhood, decimated by the military, held out scant promise of any more forthcoming. Every man was a stranger to this gaunt land of Lochiel's, and despair rose in each heart. They were wearily putting forward suggestions as to what it were best to do, when Charles, roused from his semi-stupor of fatigue, hunger, and cold, cried that he heard footsteps squelching up the wet grass. It proved to be the two Highlanders, bringing a message from Clunes. He was unable to come himself that night to the appointed rendezvous with Glenaladale, but wished them to go to 'a very fast place' in a wood two miles away. Inspection of the same—a cave on the bank of a stream—proved it a possible shelter for the Prince. The shooting of a fine hart was a boon to starving men, and strengthened Charles's modest belief that Providence was very specially looking after him.

The Prince had learned that several of the officers from his ill-fated army, including MacDonald of Lochgarry, Cameron of Achnasual, and Captain MacRaw of Glengarry's regiment, were lurking about the neighbourhood. He sent expresses in quest of them, and late that night, as he sat in the cave roughly reconstructed to some semblance of a hut, Lochgarry came to him. He



fell on his knees, kissing the Prince's hand, too overjoyed to find him in health and comparative safety to have eyes to heed his scarecrow condition. Charles was ragged, shoeless, but splendidly royal. He welcomed Lochgarry to his poor habitation as if he were receiving in his drawing-room at Holyrood. A slim ghost walked between them, young Æneas MacDonald, who with Lochgarry had led out the clan, and himself welcomed his Prince to the stronghold of Invergarry. Charles took the loyalty of the dead lad's kinsman as coolly and unquestioningly as he accepted all the devotion poured out by the thousands whom he had ruined. It was his right, their duty. Was not he their Prince?

His Royal Highness had commanded Lochgarry's attendance for an evening stroll. The fugitives were now lodged in a rude but weather-proof habitation in a wood at the foot of Loch Arkaig. The enemy was still encamped only fourteen miles off, but Charles declared this to be as well, as they were enabled to keep watch on their foes' movements. He took Lochgarry's arm with careless graciousness, and paced beside him in silence. The place was steeped in a blue twilight, broken by ghostly whispers and rustlings. Charles's brow was knit, his mouth compressed, showing that he thought hard and long. Lochgarry, though not addressed, ventured to break into the Prince's reverie. 'May I, with all respect, sir, take the liberty to ask what your Royal Highness designs to do?'

Charles came out of his muse with a start which betrayed how far away his thoughts had

been. 'Do? *Comment?* Tell me how my affairs stand, *mon cher*, then I may be better able to answer you.'

Lochgarry's eyes sparkled. 'There is still a considerable party which would rise in arms, sir. I believe your Royal Highness would very soon make a flying army of about two thousand men.' His enthusiasm quickened as he met the responsive flash in the Prince's eyes. 'The people are so terribly exasperated against Cumberland for his cruel behaviour that one of them would be worth two before the battle. This would be much the safest way for your Royal Highness's person, and as there is now plenty of money with the French treasure so lately landed, your army would soon turn very numerous, especially as the affection generally of the whole kingdom is now for you.'

Charles was carried away by the other's eagerness. 'Yes, yes, yes. Let us send to Lochiel and Cluny, who will, I know, gladly bring out their people. And you, Lochgarry?'

Lochgarry's fine head lifted in proud confidence. 'I will engage that the Glengarry MacDonalds shall all be ready, sir, in eight-and-forty hours. With them I can attack and surprise Fort Augustus, destroying and apprehending all the enemy there.'

'There are some eight hundred, betwixt regular and militia.' The Prince pondered, then turned his flashing smile upon the tall Highlander. 'It is very well. We had better summon Dr Archibald Cameron, as you are ignorant of where Lochiel and Cluny skulk.' He drew a long, quivering breath. 'I shall lead my armies again, free this poor people from the oppressor,' he

cried. 'Can you picture it, Lochgarry, the thrust and the fighting, after these weeks of hiding like a hunted beast?'

Lochgarry's eyes were moist. 'God guard your Royal Highness.' He spoke in the Gaelic, but the Prince understood.

'Surely He has guarded me, and to what end but that I might reign?'

An express to Lochiel brought back an answer in the person of his brother Dr Archibald Cameron. He had been wounded at Falkirk, but was long since recovered, an irony of fate, as he met his death in the Jacobite Cause at Tyburn seven years afterwards. He carried Lochiel's loyal apologies for not coming in person to greet his Prince. The Cameron chief was still too lame from the grape-shot in his ankles to be able to travel. Charles dispatched the new-comer and Lochgarry next day to Lochiel and Cluny, to inquire whether they agreed to Lochgarry's suggestion of raising their men afresh. Once an army of any dimensions had been got together, Charles would send a representative to the Court of France, or go himself in person. His eyes were shining, his whole aspect infectious in its enthusiasm and eager certainty. The two kissed his hand, and went off cheerfully to perform their mission. They left him in the care of the Rev. John Cameron, a Presbyterian chaplain at Fort William, Cameron of Clunes, and Captain Mac-Raw. Glenaladale had reluctantly handed over his charge to the Camerons, and later, with his brother and John MacDonald of Borradale, adventured to the west coast in search of French ships.

The two French officers who had landed at Poolewe came, after various vicissitudes and mishaps, to Torvault, where a young man calling himself Captain Drummond received them in the Prince's name. This Captain Drummond was tall and fair, carrying his head in a monstrous haughty manner, they agreed afterwards ; but despite the marks of hardship and fatigue, were he but dressed in the mode would have been a handsome fellow. He spoke perfect French. Their dispatches, they explained to him, had been handed over to Mac-Leod, the Prince's aide-de-camp, who was skulking in Seaforth's country. They related all they had to say, which Captain Drummond declared to be of no great consequence to the Prince's affairs, and after remaining two days, took their departure in the hope of finding a ship to convey them back to France. Neither had ever seen the Prince, but they asked innumerable questions concerning him, raising scandalised and amazed eyebrows at the answers. When they had gone, Charles looked at his companions and laughed. 'Did I not play *Le Capitaine Drummond* well, *mes amis* ? We must obtain possession of these dispatches.' He fretted until the packet came. Once opened, it was found to be in cypher, and directed to the French Ambassador, the Marquis D'Aiguilles, so that Charles could make nothing of it.

His Royal Highness was sleeping peacefully in the rude hut at Torvault next morning when a stealthy touch awakened him. It was the minister, who spoke low and earnestly. The Prince must not be surprised, but a body of the enemy had been sighted by one of Clunes's chil-

dren. Charles was not in the least discomposed. He asked for his gun, and summoned Captain MacRaw and Clunes's young son, Sandy, from their posts as sentries about the wood. The little party then mounted a hill above it, from which they could watch, but be unobserved themselves. Each man was resolved to sell his life dearly in defence of the Prince. Charles examined their guns, remarking dryly that as these were in tolerable order he hoped some execution would be done before they themselves were killed. 'For my part, I was bred a fowler, can charge quickly, and am a tolerable marksman. I shall be sure of one at least.' His mouth shut grimly. Was this the end?

At midnight the minister and Sandy Cameron, sent out as spies, returned to him with the information that two hundred of Loudon's men, under a Captain Grant, had discovered the hiding-place in Torvault, and carried off some of Clunes's recently purchased cattle. The two Camerons found their charge on the side of Mullan-tagart, a high hill in the Braes of Glen Kingie. Charles was lying in the heather, without covering or fire. They lighted a small one, not daring to keep it burning for longer than half an hour in case it should attract the eye of wandering country-folk. They had brought the Prince whisky, bread, and cheese, persuading him to swallow the fiery spirit, and then to try to sleep. At day-break they toiled to the very summit of Mullan-tagart, where they crouched and shivered until evening, afraid to move a yard. It was a bitterly inclement day, heavy showers of hail falling at intervals. The Prince, despite cold and wet,



slept all the morning in his soaked plaid and damp garments. They travelled when night fell, stumbling amongst rocks and tree-stumps, tearing their clothes and bruising their limbs, until the Prince's exhaustion was so pitiful that his companions implored him to rest. Charles refused, and insisted upon pressing on, but hunger and fatigue at last reduced him to tottering along aided by an arm of two stalwart Highlanders. He was wetter still next day after fording Loch Arkaig, but though he slept that night and spent the following day in the open air in his soaked clothing, he took no harm.

Lochgarry and Dr Cameron returned from their embassy to the Prince in the Braes of Achnacarry. Charles pouted over, but acquiesced in, Lochiel's and Cluny's decision not to resume hostilities. It would be of much worse consequence, they declared, to rise in arms than not. Charles, reluctantly abandoning his darling dream of marching again at the head of his army, agreed instead to the proposal that he should join Lochiel where the Cameron chief was in safe hiding. They had a journey of over thirty miles to perform, but clear moonlight beamed as guide, and if wearisome, the way proved barren of adventure. By the banks of the Lochy the Prince said farewell to the last of the Glenmoriston men, on whom he pressed a parting gift of twenty-four guineas for himself and his faithful companions, whose services had been dispensed with a few days previously. Patrick Grant gazed long after the Prince, muttering in his rude Gaelic, 'Once you are safe, *mo chridhe*, if you be on the face

of the earth I will find you out, and you and I will never part again.'

Only the night-wind and the roar of the river answered him.

The party travelled day and night, barely halting for brief rests on some friendly hill-side. Fifty Camerons, cunning men, had been collected by Lochgarry and sent in different directions to act as scouts. Thanks to their vigilance there was no surprise by the enemy, although the Prince passed within two miles of the camp at Fort Augustus. He was better equipped when he met Lochiel than the bare-footed, red-bearded scarecrow who had received the scandalised John Cameron at Loch Arkaig. A loyal clansman, one Alexander MacDonald of Tullochcrom, came to meet him as he entered the wild land of Badenoch, bearing welcome gifts of a coat, shirt, and shoes. Charles jested as he stood leaning on Dr Cameron's shoulder, the while the MacDonald, with trembling hands, fitted a shoe in turn to each long, hardened foot. It was easier to go ill-shod than hungry, he declared. He had learned to know the fourth part of a peck of meal, having lived upon the same for eight days. The MacDonald listened, tears running down his cheeks. 'Your Royal Highness shall not want while in Badenoch,' he cried fiercely. Charles smiled down at the kneeling figure, until a sudden memory slew the smile in a wrench of pain. A north of England village, staring yokels, the warmth and clang of a blacksmith's forge, himself, assured, well-clad, standing to have an iron plate hammered on to a shoe which his enthusiasm

for hard marching had walked into a hole. 'You are the first of your tribe that has ever shod a king's son.' He could hear his own voice now, and see in the light from the smithy fire the faces of his fated comrades : Sheridan, watchful, adoring ; O'Sullivan, jovial and plump ; Elcho, bored, listless, veiling his covert impertinences under smiles and deference ; the tall Highlander whose shoulder he had borrowed to lean against. The glow of firelight through an open cottage door, the little sounds of evening in a hamlet, a green, ducks waddling past, a high pump. . . . These faded, and he stared at the realities of frowning, cloud-shadowed mountains, the spreading sunset which made magic of loch and puddle, the ragged, travel-stained men who shared his hardships and dangers. There was a sob in his voice as he thanked the kindly MacDonald.

The meeting with Lochiel brought back unbearably the pain and glory of the past. The Cameron chief came hobbling and stumbling to greet his Prince, and would have knelt in spite of his infirmities only that Charles prevented him. He jested, lest he should weep instead. Was this thin, lame, haggard ghost the handsome, courteous, active Lochiel ? He clapped the lean, stooped shoulder, exclaiming with assumed levity, 'Oh no, my dear Lochiel, you don't know who may be looking from the tops of yonder hills, and if they see any such motions they'll immediately conclude that I am here, which may prove of bad consequence.' He drew away the hands that Lochiel was kissing passionately. 'Now, take me into your house, I pray.'

The house, a poor little hut, received the tall presence and his companions. 'Your Royal Highness must be weary,' Lochiel suggested gently. 'Will you be pleased to take a dram before eating?'

Charles nodded. The fatal habit had already fastened its teeth into him. 'Though I am more hungry than thirsty,' he admitted.

'His Royal Highness has borne the journey with greater courage and resolution than any of us.' Lochgarry's face glowed. 'Never was there a Highlander born who could travel up and down hills better, or suffer more fatigue.' His enthusiasm carried him away. 'Show me a king or prince in Europe could have borne the like, or the tenth part of it,' he cried.

Charles, eating collops out of a large silver saucepan, poor spoil of Cluny's and Lochiel's, smiled and observed, 'Now, gentlemen, I live like a prince.' After dinner he teased Lochiel about his luxurious table. Had he fared sumptuously like this every day while he had lived there?

Lochiel answered in his grave fashion. Since the burning of Achnacarry and the sufferings of his clansmen after Culloden he smiled seldom and with difficulty. 'Yes, sir, I have for now near three months that I am here, and hereabouts, with my cousin Cluny and Breakachie, who has so provided for me that I have still had plenty of such as you see, and I thank Heaven that your Royal Highness has come safe through so many dangers to take a part.' The tired voice shook.

Charles flung out an impulsive hand. 'You are no fatter for it, *mon cher*. Now, Mr Cameron

here thinks me to have put on flesh since he saw me at Inverness.'

He was sitting in the narrow, comfortless sheiling two days later when Cluny MacPherson came to him. Did either remember a halt in the triumphant march to Dalwhinnie, and one carried prisoner to the fair-haired young man at the head of the Highlanders? Did Cluny, looking back, regret the choice taken at the parting of the ways? There was no trace of anything but passionate loyalty as he tried to fling himself on his knees upon the damp, earthen floor. Charles caught him by the arm, kissing the hard, tanned cheek. Later, when both were calmer, he remarked wistfully, 'I'm sorry, Cluny, that you and your regiment were not at Culloden. I did not hear till of very late that you was so near as to have come up with us that day.' He sighed. His fortunes might have gone differently if reinforcements had arrived in time, but never would the stubborn young heart admit its mad folly in fighting that bleak April morning.

Cluny was dissatisfied with the Prince's present quarters. They were not any too safe, he declared, and His Royal Highness's health might be impaired by sleeping in caves or on damp earth. The alternative was to move a couple of miles further into Benalder, where the shelter offered proved to be a leaking, inadequate bothy. The smoke from their fire hung about it in choking eddies, but Charles laughed, despite smarting throat and streaming eyes, professing himself well pleased with everything. After two



or three nights and days of this discomfort the Prince shifted his camp again. High up in the face of a rough and rocky mountain Cluny had contrived a cunning shelter out of boulders, half cave, part cage, edged and hidden with thick holly. The interior was of necessity exceedingly primitive, but afforded accommodation for some six persons and facilities for cooking. The view over mountain, valley, and loch was superb, but Charles had no taste for natural beauties, and would much have preferred a day's sport amongst the game which flourished in plenty throughout Cluny's territory. His lady was in London, but Cluny's three sisters, then living at his brother-in-law's, MacPherson of Breakachie, set to work with loyal, loving fingers at shirts to replenish the royal wardrobe, now reduced to the one which His Royal Highness chanced to be wearing. They also supplied the majority of the provisions enjoyed by the Prince and his companions. The weeks went by, Charles in perfect safety in this queer habitation, although there was a camp of militia at Sheriffmuir, a mile from Garvemore, and some four or five only from Dalwhinnie, a frequented stage on the Highland road between Inverness and Edinburgh. Friends and foes alike were utterly astray and puzzled as to what could have become of the Prince. A rumour crept about that he had escaped to the East Coast through the Athol country, and a strict watch was kept on any vessels landing or departing between Aberdeen and Arbroath. Again, he was reported to be hiding in Angus or the Mearns, and certain houses were closely searched for him. All the time he was safe in Benalder, companioned by

Lochiel, Cluny, Lochgarry, Dr Cameron, Breakachie, Lochiel's servant, a young Cameron, and four clansmen of Cluny's. These MacPhersons knew no English, and were stolidly contented with their posts as hewers of wood and drawers of water.

The trees were turning daily, and the bracken grown to rust and lemon. At nights the leaves fell gently, to lie in russet mounds, gathered together by the wind's besom. Already the days were shortening, and autumn's touch became visible everywhere in the change from green and gold to sadder, sombrer hues. The air each morning bore a tang of frost on its keen breath. It was urgent—necessary—that the Prince should be got out of the country before winter covered it. This life of hardship, hiding, and adventure, borne with lifted chin and smiling lip, might be possible throughout the summer, but even his hardy frame and superb constitution would never withstand such privations in the cold of a Scottish back-end. Useless for him to boast gaily that save for his illness at Elgin he had come unscathed through a winter campaign. A sigh of relief rose from the hearts of those who guarded him when news was brought by one of Cluny's trusted spies that two French ships, with Colonel Warren and young Sheridan aboard, had anchored in Lochnanuagh.

The party left for the coast in the dark of a September morning, an hour after midnight. The sky was fathomless, with but a few frosty stars. They were anxious to reach Borradaile with what speed they could, as the ships had arrived some

days before, and had it not been for the timely meeting of Dr Cameron and Cluny with Cluny's messenger, the Prince might not have heard of their landing until after further time had elapsed. He had dispatched his two friends to Loch Arkaig on what he described to the rest as 'a private affair,' which was that Dr Cameron might show Cluny the exact spot where the French gold lay buried. Ill for Cluny was that knowledge, ill for Archibald Cameron, and heavy the curse which rested upon the hidden thing. It was to divide kinsman from kinsman, sow dissension, suspicion, bitter animosity between the children of the same clan, and to smirch even Cluny's untarnished honour in the end.

The first halt in the journey was made at the smoky little sheiling of Uiskchilra, Charles's former quarters. The morning was one of cold blues and russets, with a taste of frost in the air, and smoke rising very straight. During the day the party was reinforced by Breakachie, who had been absent for some days inquiring into the possibility of the Prince and his companions sailing from the East Coast. He was intercepted on his way there and requested to return by Cameron of Clunes, who sent a messenger after him with news of the French vessels in Loch-nanuagh. Breakachie brought with him Charles's former officer, Colonel John Roy Stewart, who knew nothing of the Prince's whereabouts, but understood that he was coming to join Lochiel. Charles was in a mischievous mood. As the travellers approached the hut, he rolled himself up in his plaid and lay down behind the door. Rain had gathered in a depression before the

doorway. John Roy Stewart, entering, saw two bright eyes peeping at him out of folds of Cameron tartan. Was this Lochiel? Nay, Lochiel never had such eyes. 'O Lord, my master!' gasped the astonished man. Charles was sorry for the shock that he had caused, particularly when he saw John Roy Stewart collapse in the puddle in a faint. He ran to him, full of excited apologies. 'Eh, my dear, but it was a mean trick to play. Sit up and drink this brandy, and tell me do you find me altered. What has befallen you all these months?'

Besides escorting John Roy Stewart, Breakachie also brought the Prince three of His Royal Highness's favourite fusees. They were handsome toys, one mounted with gold, another with silver, a third half-mounted. Charles fondled them lovingly. '*Hé*, but I am glad to have them again. My thanks, *mon ami*.' He gave Breakachie his hand to kiss, adding gleefully: 'It is remarkable that my enemies have not discovered one farthing of my money, a rag of my clothes, or one piece of my arms.'

Holy Cross Day found the party at Corvoy. The Prince was so refreshed with a good sleep, and the country so wild and lonely, that nothing would do but that they should test the restored fusees and their own skill by a shooting match. For marks they tossed their bonnets up into the air and aimed at them. The Prince was an easy winner, quick of hand and accurate of eye. When they had exhausted themselves arguing and laughing, and deliberately wasted good ammunition, he consented to start again in the

evening. By sunset they had reached Uisknifichit on the borders of Glenroy, where a few hours' sleep were snatched. Before a red, frosty sunrise looked down they were well into Glenroy, and armed themselves by a long day of quiet as a prelude to further travelling. Nearing Achnacarry in the evening, they came to the brink of the Lochy under a clear moon. The river was too swift and deep to ford safely. Lochiel consulted Cameron of Clunes, who had met them there, and now triumphantly produced an old boat. 'I have carried it from Loch Arkaig. The only one left unburnt by the enemy of all the boats you had, Lochiel.' Lochiel glanced in distress at the Prince, but Charles was not listening. He stood, his haughty head a little bowed, reliving the past. 'I am afraid we will not be safe in it,' Lochiel demurred. Clunes offered promptly to cross first and show them the way. He added that he had some bottles of brandy, lifted from Fort Augustus, and suggested that the whole party would be the better of a dram.

Lochiel limped over to the musing Prince. Charles was standing with folded arms, his back against a tree, gazing at the rapid water. 'Will your Royal Highness take a dram?' the Cameron asked.

'Oh, can you have a dram here?' The Prince's voice was high, delighted. 'From Fort Augustus? Come, that pleases me very well, to have provisions from my enemies. Let us have it.' He drank a liberal share of three of the bottles, then stood alternately laughing and calling out warnings as Clunes, with several companions, adven-



tured across in the leaky old boat. Charles himself was the next to cross, uttering little cries and gasps as the overloaded tub lurched and tipped. Lochiel and the rest came last, the boat only just surviving its final load, and the company, heartier for the brandy, resumed their march.

Achnacarry sobered the Prince's high spirits. The enemy, not content with burning down the house, had ruined the policies and carried off or destroyed everything within the stately walls. Achnacarry stood, a gaunt, stricken thing, a shell of what had once been a home, as maimed as its owner himself. Lochiel's distress was for the Prince's discomforts. 'I am indeed grieved, sir, to offer your Royal Highness such poor accommodation,' he murmured. Charles only clung to him and wept, wildly, unrestrainedly. 'Lochiel, Lochiel, can you look at this and love me still? If you had held back, if you had not joined me——'

The other gazed at him with eyes mournful, yet steadfast. A smile glimmered on the set lips. 'Were it all to be done again, sir, I would not have acted otherwise,' said Donald Cameron.

The Prince flung out his hands. 'I will not say "Forgive me." I think, indeed, Lochiel, you do not know the need for such a word.' He threw up his head. 'Ah, but when I come again, as I shall come, Lochiel, you and your Camerons will be the first to greet and join me.' He fell into a day-dream, a smile, tremulous, fugitive, yet triumphant, upon his face. 'We shall rebuild Achnacarry, you and I,' he cried.

Donald Cameron turned away. They might

indeed, at this ebb of the Prince's fortunes, look to the future, and like men fey, dream dazzling dreams of Charles's return at the head of a French army, but to Lochiel the ruins of his house cried to him from the ground, and no new Achnacarry could raise from the dead the kindly home murdered by Hanoverian hands. Sleepless, while the rest snored, he clung to the last waning hours spent on this desolated but beloved spot, as a prisoner before his death morning might hoard his last night. In a few days this land would be a dream. He was going into exile, possibly to eat the bitter bread of foreign dependence and patronage, leaving behind a ruined people who had trusted him. He looked at the Prince, now slumbering peacefully in the cloudy moonlight that filtered down through the roofless walls, still standing fire-scarred and windowless. What did the future hold for him? He had been preserved, miraculously, it seemed to the simple hearts who beat for him only, assuredly that he might come again and deliver Scotland from her foes and usurpers. Was it possible to believe in this? Lochiel turned from the unconscious face, very young, and gazed bitterly at the destruction and desolation all around, the stones and rubble which had been friendly rooms, the devastated slopes of ground where springing things had once flourished. 'If I built it again a thousand times, it were not Achnacarry,' his mournful thoughts ran. 'Perhaps these griefs befall to show us that our continuing city is not here. Our house truly is one not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, yet I think around it, for us who loved Scotland, there will still be heather and high hills.'

The woods of Borradaie had been green with spring when the Prince walked among them in the chill of April. Now, in late September, they were turned to a gold which heralded the year's dying. The wind which blew landwards from Lochnanuagh, where it filled the white sails of the waiting ships, was gentle, languid, cool. In the friendly dusk, he who had landed proudly fourteen months before, on his pathway to a throne, slipped away like a thief in the night from this same beach of white sand, this same little loch that had later been his road to the isles. He was not alone in his going. Over a hundred Scottish exiles, gentle and simple, united by the common bond of their ruin in the Jacobite Cause, sailed with him. He went amongst them, greeting former acquaintances, including the faithful Neil MacEachain, listening with drooping lip to tales of hardship and marvellous escapes, comforting those left behind, like Cluny, with his vague and empty promises of a speedy return at the head of ten thousand men. As the hours drew on his high spirits lessened and he fell silent. At midnight they weighed anchor, and with a fair wind to speed them, both ships were soon clear of the loch and making for the open sea. Men crowded their decks, eyes dim with tears straining to catch through the darkness the waning outlines of the land they were leaving for ever. Soon even the tall shapes of the mountains had passed from sight, and the wail of the breeze in sail and rigging sounded like a requiem for a doomed Cause and a Prince's abject failure. Charles had escaped the gins and snares of his foes, but his worst enemy went with him into exile—himself.

BOOK II.

THE NESTLESS BIRD

‘What can a bird do that has not found a right nest? He must flit from bough to bough—ainsi use les Irondel.’

*Written on the back of a draft letter  
by Prince Charles.*



## CHAPTER I.

‘To France, to France, and get what you have lost.’

SHAKESPEARE.

AUTUMN had come to Paris, a gay city on the surface, but underneath a whirlpool of misery and squalor. The poor were starving, while the rich and the nobles, despite the war, banqueted and danced. The court had a new diversion to occupy their idle minds and empty heads. Prince Charles Edward Stuart, so lately arrived in safety on French soil, was in the city, at least living at Clichy, and French ladies of all ages and attractions vied with one another in fêting, flattering, and entertaining the hero of the recent Rising. They whispered to one another behind painted fans. But he was handsome, this young Prince. He had much more the grand air than his brother, who fled from all women as they said the Devil fled from holy water. He was religious, an ascetic, almost a monk, the Prince Henry. Different stories were told of the Prince of Wales. (*Le voilà, ma chérie!* Does he not look the part far better than that fat Frederick?) What was this tale of a Scots girl who carried him in safety over to Skye, from under the noses of his enemies? Oh, *là là*, but she was brave, *cette demoiselle*. They had taken her prisoner, but surely no harm would happen her? Echoes of the Rising, grim hints of its

aftermath in trials and executions, burnings and famine, did not disturb the gaiety or complacency of Paris. Scotland was a cold, *triste* country, with happily the sea between it and sunny France. What did it matter what befell a barbarous, bare-legged nation whose kilted savages the young hero of the hour had led to battle? In a city where beheading or breaking on the wheel attracted hundreds of high-born ladies to watch the spectacle, faint rumours of the numbers put to death in the Jacobite Cause produced no emotion.

Charles was the sensation of the day. His pathetic history—the child of a long line of kings, the last two exiled and dethroned—his agreeable pretensions and fascinating personality made him, to the silly women that hung about the court of Louis, as romantic a hero as any which their favourite ballads or old tales enshrined. The Queen, a Polish princess by birth, who had been the friend and companion of the unhappy Clementina Sobieski before she linked her fate with cold James Stuart, professed to see in Charles a strong likeness to his mother. She petted and welcomed him on this account. Louis was suave, flattering, chatty, but in definite promises, tangible help as slippery and elusive as the proverbial eel. Following upon a week's enforced retirement and inaction, spent chiefly in the most necessary task of procuring a new wardrobe, during which time Charles remained very privately in the château placed at his disposal by the French king, receiving none but his brother Henry, the Prince made a state entry into Versailles. Upon this he squandered reck-

lessly money that would have saved countless lives in the starving and devastated Highlands. He wore rose-coloured velvet and silver, and glittered with jewels, a lavish display which made the exiled Scots gentlemen who accompanied him grind their teeth. They went with the Prince out of loyalty, but their dour, unsmiling faces, their plain attire, were both markedly out of place in the court of laughter, frivolity, and extravagance, where Charles himself looked so thoroughly at home. He had merged the ragged, half-starved lad who flung himself on the generosity of the Highland hearts in this French-gabbling, powdered, scented, curled young man. His own brother, when they met, failed to recognise him. Charles had left Rome a mere boy, undeveloped, inexperienced, and returned to France after an absence and adventures that aged him more than the actual months which had lapsed since the brothers met. Their reunion was tender and touching in the extreme, those who witnessed it declaring that they would never forget it. But Charles had more to occupy him than Henry's mere society promised. He was passionately eager to see the French king without delay. He must obtain Louis's help in men and money. He dared not betray the people whom he had ruined. Henry, nervous, uneasy, was in no position to do more for Charles than engineer, with O'Brien, the Jacobite agent at the court, the private audience which followed the public arrival. Charles gained little from it. As he sat receiving Louis's frothy compliments, responding in fluent French, his mind stored up a vision of great mountains, a bleeding

land which had hidden him from his foes for five long months and now cried to him to come again and deliver her. He pestered the French king on behalf of his exiled officers. Louis was generous enough, making gifts of money to Lochiel, Lochgarry, John Roy Stewart, Lord Ogilvy, and many others. Their sad faces rebuked Charles's inaction and extravagance. He was frantically eager to be doing something. His nerves, somewhat shattered by his hardships, had fully recovered on the voyage to France. He would not have been human had he failed to appreciate and enjoy—temporarily, at any rate—civilisation, luxury, flattery, in the place of privation and danger; but these things soon staled with such great issues at stake. His head was in no way turned by the attentions showered upon him from the court downwards. The remembrance of his failure was too recent, too rankling, and its bitter lesson was continually driven home by the news contained in every packet of fresh trials and executions of those who had served him. He might work off his superfluous energies occasionally by sport, for which, Henry reported to James, he had lost none of his old ardour, only pleasure-making and continual compliments quickly palled. He had no use for women. He snubbed Madame de Pompadour, who might have done more for him with Louis than anybody, had he cared to conciliate her. He amused himself with the lady of the black eyes, but regarded her solely as a useful weapon to goad Louis, should he become his son-in-law. A thousand trifles fretted the proud nature. James wrote long letters of advice and

complaint from Rome, the burden of which was 'Gang warily.' Henry, prim, priest-ridden, proved to be no companion and no assistance. '*Mon Dieu!*' Charles stormed one day, 'what were you doing, Henry, all these months in Paris? Had I enjoyed your opportunities of Louis's ear, I should have forced him to send over an army, with myself at the head, last spring. And you—you pray all day, but you do not act. Heaven helps those who help themselves, they say.' He laughed wildly.

Henry crossed himself furtively. He did not recognise his brother in this fierce, embittered, ambitious, thwarted creature.

Charles refused to go to Rome, to see James, to seek the Pope's blessing. In his secret heart he knew that many refugees and fugitives had gone there before him. What tales, what twisted truths might they not bear, of wise counsel overlooked, quarrels with, and defiance of, his best advisers, and—most shameful of all—that headlong flight to the isles instead of at least seeking to make terms with his conquering enemy? He put the thought aside. 'When I come again, as I shall come, I must come'—he ground his strong teeth—'then it is I who shall be the victor.' Like a cold wind there blew across his vision the bitter reminder: 'Can you restore to life the strangled, headless dead, bring back the starving women and bairns, rebuild houses like Achnacarry, Invergarry, Borradaile, Morar?' He covered his face. 'Eh, *mon Dieu!*' A few minutes afterwards he was calling for a coach to take him in to Paris. There was a masquerade that evening at Madame de Talmond's.



He must choose suitable attire. The ascetic Henry, staggered by his extravagances, was dragged with him. They quarrelled, not for the first time, parting with sour looks on either side.

Madame de Talmond was the earliest of the women whose intrigues and bad influence were destined to add to Charles's ruin. She was fifteen years older than he, the wife of a dull husband, Anne Charles, Prince de Talmond. Her position at court was unassailable and enviable. Her relationship to the Queen (she was a Pole and a cousin of Louis's consort) secured her the latter's favour, while her sharp tongue, magnificent toilettes, and endless variety gained that of Louis. The Pompadour scowled, but failed to dislodge her, until her bare-faced and open championship of Charles procured her banishment to her estates in Lorraine. She posed as a *philosophe*, and encouraged the Prince's already indifferent attitude towards religious matters. From the first she took possession of him, and was eagerly on his side. He accepted her invitations and flatteries, but oil and vitriol might as well have tried to mix when they essayed a closer relationship. Both were high-spirited, proud, petulant, domineering. Each boasted a violent temper, concealed under powder, patches, and pretence. In the glittering ease of a court, one of a multitude of other admiring women, Charles found Madame de Talmond delightfully plastic and attractive. If there were claws she did not show them. Sometimes she was blunt and shrewd, advising him unpalatably but sensibly. At others, she waxed languorous, flirtatious, and then she

bored him. Women as pawns in the political game he could endure, but women as personalities, demanding what he was not prepared to give, irked and irritated him. In a world of backstairs intrigue and underhand dealing, where no man could trust his neighbour, much less his neighbour's wife, Charles declined to use petticoat influence. He would make his demands to the French king, and if Louis would not accede to them, he should turn elsewhere for help. Spain was Catholic, friendly, a new king recently ascended to her throne. Charles meditated a secret journey thither. Always, too, there was marriage, a match of policy and wealth. What of the Czarina? It did not matter that she was eleven years his senior, and so fiercely anti-Jacobite that she refused the Earl Marischal sanctuary in her dominions. 'I could teach her differently,' muttered Charles.

He had failed signally to learn his own lessons. The old folly of employing a multitude of bad counsellors, which had done so much to wreck his recent expedition, pursued him here. His confidant was George Kelly, later to become his private secretary. In the meantime he had written impetuously to Sir Thomas Sheridan at Rome, demanding that he should come to him without delay. He liked Kelly, but there were secrets that Charles could confide in none but 'Sherry.' He pouted over Sheridan's being in Rome at all. Well he knew that he would not have gone there but for a stern command from James.

My Lord Elcho had loitered and idled in Paris throughout the summer. Paris was a city of

attractions to a young nobleman who knew it before through the Grand Tour, and was now arrived in it with the halo about his head of having come unscathed through Prince Charles's rebellion. My lord had landed in rags, with his companions in as dire a plight as himself, and enjoyed replenishing his wardrobe whilst awaiting developments. Lacking loyalty and patience, Elcho was not the stuff of which adherents to a lost cause are made. He was firmly resolved to cut himself adrift from the wreckage and flotsam that must follow in the wake of this mismanaged and unsuccessful Rising. He lost no time in making his submission to the Government, and wrote pathetic letters to influential friends of himself or his family, begging for reinstatement.

So far the appeal was in vain. Authority, stabilised by fear, was determined to crush the Jacobite disloyalty to an extent that should put it out of its hands to attempt the same thing again. Individuals must suffer accordingly as they were involved. The craziest unfounded rumours were going about with regard to the rebel commanders. Elcho was accused of unnamed brutalities, of threats to maim captured Whig officers. His petitions were ignored, but he still hoped.

The arrival of the Prince was the town topic which next engrossed everybody's attention. Elcho heard with a contemptuous lip of the state entry into Versailles. It was eminently characteristic of Elcho's late leader, the waste, the glittering extravagance, the senseless ostentation; but Elcho hotly condemned the Scots

loyalists who had openly countenanced the costly procession by taking part in it. It spoke badly for my Lord Ogilvy, whose young wife was still a prisoner in Edinburgh Castle. He had been more fortunate, escaping by way of Norway with several others. What of Lochiel, sober, sensible, yet riding behind one of the state coaches? My Lord Elcho resolved more determinedly than ever to hold aloof from these madmen, and as for their Prince . . .

John Drummond, now succeeded to his brother's empty title of Duke of Perth, kept up a surface friendship with Elcho. Both were united in the common bond of exile, the growing pinch of poverty, a like contempt for Prince Charles, who was freely abusing Lord John, Lord George Murray, and Æneas MacDonald. Lord John was, notwithstanding, still loyal. Over the supper-table he persuaded Elcho to call at Clichy and pay his respects to the Prince.

It was a still November day when Elcho rode out to the unspoiled village, along a road where poplar leaves still shivered against a blue sky. The narrow streets of Paris were strewn with filth and refuse. She was foul and sour-smelling beneath her beauty, like a great lady who does not wash. The country air blew sweet and clean by contrast. Elcho was young enough to enjoy the motion of a good horse under him, to look with sanguine eyes towards the future. This life of exile and pinching could not continue indefinitely. He was finished with the Jacobites, but a visit of ceremony, merely to pay his respects to the young man whom Louis recognised and

received, if not as a prince of the blood, committed him to nothing. Charles owed him money, too. Elcho's sluggish blood quickened as he remembered that careless gift of fifteen hundred guineas. His thin brows met. How could he have been so mad? Then, from the eldest son and heir of a Scottish peer, his future assured, his prospects rosy, the money had been a graceful gesture, a sign that he did not come with empty hands to serve the Cause. But now—weeks of carefulness, the uncertainty of what his life henceforward might be, the hovering shadows of outlawry, poverty, attainder, heightened Elcho's unease and shrewdness to cupidity. The money was never actually mentioned as a gift. It had been a loan, a convenience to the temporarily embarrassed Prince. 'I shall come to St James's to claim it.' Elcho could see the low-ceilinged, smoke-filled room, hear the gay tones and ringing laugh of the Prince as the new adherent prophesied thus. Elcho mused. Perhaps it would be wiser not to mention the money to-day. He might put his demand in writing at a more convenient opportunity. Elcho's elastic memory shelved that last interview, the crouching figure on the damp ground, not a mile from the din of battle, his own bitter abuse of Charles. 'We were not ourselves. We were both over-excited. He cannot remember.' Elcho spurred his horse and rode faster.

The villa, private in a walled garden, sat steeped in mellow sunshine. A mill, a blue stream, a rustic inn, left it remote from the din and bustle of Paris. Elcho cantered up to the door as assuredly, as confidently, as he



had ridden to Gray's Mill fourteen months before. A lounging lackey took his name, while another came to the horse's bridle. Elcho's hard young face softened a trifle. The Prince at least had the good taste to live simply, to abandon the magnificent Château de St Antoine, to accept as small a share of Louis's bounty as his dignity permitted. Possibly he would come himself in his impetuous fashion to welcome Elcho and bring him in.

He waited for a long time. There was no sound in the sunny garden save the occasional whisper of a detached leaf falling on the grass. The wind made a little noise in the thinning poplars. At last the horse pricked its ears. Elcho caught footsteps, quick, light, coming through the hall, and prepared to dismount, to kneel.

It was not the Prince. Young Sheridan, whom Elcho had never liked, and whose appearance here was a sufficient proof that the Prince had not outgrown his infatuation for the Irish, appeared leisurely. Elcho read in his bringing of the royal message a deliberate insult. He could have endured the snub better from the lips of a lackey.

'His Royal Highness declines to receive you, my lord.'

The tone was casual. Elcho's hand tightened on the bridle-rein. 'Does His Royal Highness understand that I am here in person, sir?'

'Assuredly, my lord, but the Prince was—well—somewhat surprised at your presenting yourself and asking for an audience. He has seen your submission to the Government in the Gazette of Utrecht, and——' A shrug of Mr Sheridan's shapely shoulders completed the sentence.

There was nothing left but to retire with what dignity he could muster. My Lord Elcho bowed, murder in his heart. Mr Sheridan bowed also, less from ceremony than to hide the delighted smile which parted his lips. 'He rides well, my Lord Elcho,' reflected the Irishman, watching the receding figure.

Elcho clattered furiously along the darkening, rutty road. Ahead, the lights of Paris were beginning to spring up. Dusk had fallen swiftly. The air was chill and damp. He hated the melancholy sound of the wind across dark fields and water. He halted at a tavern, where he drank sour wine and fell into conversation with three ragged compatriots. They had escaped with their lives and what they stood up in. Their talk was of the Prince, how much Charles would wring from the French king and his ministers. Was there hope of another rising? Elcho violently repudiated the idea. Then how did the Prince propose to compensate those whom he had ruined? Elcho shrugged his shoulders, his heart hot with the memory of his own rebuff. The Prince would do nothing for the Scots, he declared bitterly. He did not even seem sensible of the much that they had done for him. Oh, a regiment for Lochiel or my Lord Ogilvy, perhaps, but the common people might starve for all Charles cared. Elcho distributed a few coins amongst the famished trio, less out of charity than from a careless liking to hear them thank and bless him in their own tongue. It brought back the heather, the dun shapes of the deer, the sea washing below the old house which had cradled him. A cold fear companioned him on

his journey back to his lodging. Was he never to see Scotland, to take his rightful place as eldest son and heir, to forget the glamour and madness of the Rising that now seemed like to cost him dear? He had none of Lochiel's serene loyalty, of Lord George Murray's stern faith and patience, of the unquestioning devotion of those who loved Prince Charles. 'He has ruined a nation, yet he can smile and jest, and go to the empty gaieties at Versailles or Fontainebleau with a light heart,' Elcho raged. 'The very silk upon his back is paid for by Louis; and he sends his gentleman to turn me from the door, me, who lent him my sword and my all!'

## CHAPTER II.

'Lo ! I am come to autumn,  
When all the leaves are gold ;  
Grey hairs and golden leaves cry out  
The year and I are old.

In youth I sought the prince of men,  
Captain in cosmic wars.  
Our Titan even the weeds would show  
Defiant to the stars.'

G. K. CHESTERTON.

THE weeks leading to winter went on drearily, unfruitfully. Charles fretted at Clichy, unable to obtain further audiences or assistance from Louis. The latter's offer of a suitable abode and allowance for both the Stuart brothers had been scornfully and angrily refused by Charles. Gradually he was alienating and displeasing those who had served and still might help him. Cardinal Tencin, that sly-lipped ecclesiastic who owed his scarlet hat to the interest and favour of James, came frequently to visit the Prince. He held out hopes, vague, indefinite, that the French ministry might find it possible to grant the succours which Charles so eagerly desired. Of course—the narrow eyes half closed—there must be concessions, mutual obligations. Charles, lounging and inattentive, sat up, pricked to eagerness. For instance——? The Cardinal murmured of Ireland. In the event of a restoration, if Ireland were to be yielded to France, to become a French pro-

vince as some equivalent for the expense that France must sustain in assisting the Prince's undertaking—— The oily voice was checked by Charles starting to his feet. He was deeply flushed, his eyes blazing. '*Non, Monsieur le Cardinal! tout ou rien! Point de partage!*' He repeated the words vehemently more than once, walking to and fro agitatedly. The Cardinal, alarmed, begged that nothing might be said to Louis or his ministers. It was merely a project of his own, prompted by the love and regard which he had for the illustrious house of Stuart. The Prince looked straight into the crafty face. He shrugged his shoulders. 'Be at ease. I shall not give myself the trouble even to think about it.'

His enemies were many and merciless, his friends few and powerless. He wrote vehement letters, full of abuse of Louis, the ministers, the Jacobite agents, the indifferent sovereigns of other countries, to the sad king at Rome. James wrote back, counselling the two things Charles was least capable of—patience and waiting. In England the toll of executions and forfeiture went on relentlessly. The first snow fell in Paris. The exiles, the voiceless, gently nurtured like young Lumisden or Laurence Oliphant, were near starvation, but still trustful, hopeful. The Prince would yet head a new army, and none be readier than they to serve in it.

Charles had his genuine griefs to add to his anxieties. If he flaunted his beauty and his finery at the opera the day that his adherents perished on the scaffold, his satin and diamonds merely covered an aching heart. His personal oppor-



tunities of appealing to Louis being impossible, he embodied his feelings, his hopes, his wishes in a brief memorial. He sketched shortly the events of the late campaign, and its chief causes of failure : the lack of money, supplies, and regular soldiers. He pointed out the desperate condition of Scotland, the wrath of the people at the barbarous treatment meted out to them, intensifying their loyalty to himself, their fighting spirit ; and wound up by begging for a force of some twenty thousand men. He should employ these usefully on behalf of Louis and himself. '*Ces interets sont inseparables,*' he wrote finally.

Louis vouchsafed no reply. The Prince watched daily for an answer in writing, or a summons to the French court to discuss matters in person. Neither came. He chafed and grew thin within the four walls of the sheltering villa. In public he held his head high, dressed sumptuously, and even to the eyes of his most loyal followers showed heartless and uncaring. Only a wet pillow, or the close-lipped Kelly, could have told of hours when his accumulated rage and misery at his impotence and powerlessness found vent in tears, well-nigh in despair.

The courier from Rome had arrived. Charles snatched the packet from the secretary's hand, and withdrew to puzzle out his correspondence. Why did Sheridan delay? Even with bad roads impeding winter travelling, he surely had had ample time to receive Charles's imperious summons to Paris, and to obey it? He knew Sheridan's writing, and eagerly tore open the sealed enclosure bearing it on the outer cover. What

was this? A mass of written material, all relating to the Prince or his affairs, including a draft of what was evidently a dying speech. Charles whirled the papers over with frantic hands. Ah! here was a letter in the handwriting of Edgar, King James's private secretary. Charles mastered the contents with difficulty, his sight blurred by tears. Sir Thomas was dead, Edgar wrote. He had died suddenly from apoplexy, and Edgar was forwarding all the correspondence found in Sheridan's repositories that had to do with the Prince's concerns. Charles sat white and stricken. Another friend gone. Perth, Athol, and now Sheridan. He gazed into the future with blank eyes. For weeks past, since his arrival on French soil, he had counted and depended upon Sheridan's coming to him more ardently than he realised. He had offended Kelly by declining to confide fully in him. There were certain hopes and enterprises, schemes and desires, which Charles could tell to Sheridan only. And now Sheridan would never hear them. That hurried, dreadful parting at Invergarry had been their farewell in this world. Never again would Sheridan pet him, soothe his vague apprehensions, lull his fears as only he could, advise him, guide him. Sheridan's influence might not always have been of the wisest, as certain incidents in the late mismanaged campaign bore witness, but his personal devotion to the Prince was unquestioned and sincere. Charles, for his part, loved Sheridan as much as his shallow nature, obsessed by inordinate ambition, could love anybody. Recent events, other lovers and companions, had blurred a little Sheridan's image, but he was the first person

whom Charles summoned to him when once in safety, the keeper of secrets and dark devices. The Prince turned over the scattered papers with cold fingers. A dying speech! So Sheridan envisaged and contemplated the possibility of being taken prisoner and sacrificed in his darling's Cause? Sheridan's last letter, dated November 3rd, had been written from Albano, congratulating the Prince on reaching France and safety. 'I shall not trouble your Royal Highness with representing to you the cruel anxieties under which I have laboured ever since that unfortunate day that tore me from your presence.' Charles, unimaginative, stupid, could picture Sheridan's misery. He was distracted with fear for his Carluccio, in disgrace with James, who first upbraided him for leaving the Prince (an accusation only mollified by the production of Charles's written command to Sheridan), and then blamed Sir Thomas for influencing and advising Charles wrongly. The Prince stared dismally. 'And now I have no one but Kelly. Can I trust him as I trusted 'Sherry'? I have a very good opinion of him, and must do him the justice of saying I am very well pleased with him; but neither him, nor anybody else much less, I would absolutely trust in my secrets as I would Sir Thomas.' He frowned as he thought of the toil and labour occasioned by Sheridan's delayed arrival, the necessity for much personal writing that he dared not confide to a secretary. All these blank days he had been comforting and supporting his waning hopes with the certainty of Sheridan's coming. Now he would never come. Charles must wait and look in vain. Sheridan

was dead and buried, masses sung for him, the last darkness over his head.

During his wanderings in the Highlands and Islands Charles had pursued a resolute policy of confiding his projects to no one. One band of faithful friends received him from another, the latter not knowing whither he proposed to go, or whose roof he elected to shelter beneath. This secretiveness, which had served its purpose very well during danger and uncertainty, now grew and gathered upon the Prince's nature. He would confide in no one, consult no one, trust no one. He looked askance at Henry, whom he suspected darkly of writing everything, however trivial, to James. He mistrusted Cardinal Tencin, D'Argenson, the war minister, O'Brien, his father's friends and agents. He resented hotly James's criticisms of Kelly, Sheridan (when alive), and Charles's own attitude towards the French ministry. 'That kind of vermin' was His Royal Highness's complimentary summing-up of the last. James warned Charles bluntly that he would disgust the court of France by his conduct, and vainly advised toleration and patience. He might as well have expected humanity from the Duke of Cumberland. Charles, petulant, suspicious, deeply disappointed and offended, shook off the dust of Paris and withdrew to Avignon.

My Lord Elcho was accustomed to speak his mind. Amongst the little coterie of exiled and embittered Jacobites in Paris, daily reinforced by men who had gained the Continent with their bare lives, he discussed the Prince's policy, past

and present, using a free and malicious tongue. His caustic comments upon, and unfavourable criticisms of, the late Rising were naturally carried to the ears of the person responsible for it. Charles raged dumbly. So Elcho, his *ci-devant* aide-de-camp, dared to speak thus of his Prince? It was some sour satisfaction that Elcho's plea for pardon was not acceded to by the Government at home, but Charles was resolved that his former adherent should not remain in Paris, a scowling witness of his own impotence with the French king. A timely threat of the Bastille expedited my Lord Elcho's departure, and Venice subsequently received the honour of his patronage and presence.

The Continent was now the refuge and resort of every Jacobite fugitive fortunate enough to reach it. Elcho, amusing himself by a flirtation with a Venetian beauty as antidote to the grave company of the Earl Marischal, came across numerous compatriots and former acquaintances. One encounter brought back vividly the past months of campaigning. Elcho was struggling through a motley throng of masqueraders at a carnival, when he thrust against a masked figure. It greeted him by name. Elcho started violently. How often had he heard that voice at the Prince's council-table, or directing operations and issuing orders in camp or action? He had last listened to it on that fated sixteenth of April. 'My lord!' he stammered.

Lord George Murray nodded grimly. Neither then nor afterwards did he confide in Elcho the tale of his hardships and adventures. He merely mentioned that he had landed in Holland on



Christmas Day, and was passing through Venice on his way to Rome. He was thinner, sterner, more thoughtful, but not embittered or hopeless.

‘Your lordship is seeking an audience of the King?’ Elcho hazarded. Lord George inclined his head. ‘Ah! you have not then seen His Royal Highness?’

Their eyes met through the slits in their masks. The carnival music was very loud.

‘I was advised that it would be better to wait to do so until after I had been received by His Majesty.’ Lord George’s tone was cold, dry, non-committal. ‘What news have you of friends, my lord? My poor brother, you will of course have heard, died in the Tower, and the Duke of Perth during the voyage to France.’ His brows drew together as he recalled that ghostly whisper at Ruthven : *A woman told me that I should die at sea.*

Elcho mentioned a few compatriots. Hunter of Burnside had accompanied him when he left Paris. My Lord Ogilvy was there. No doubt Lord George was acquainted with Lady Ogilvy’s daring and successful escape from Edinburgh Castle? No? Then he must hear it presently. From all accounts she had better have remained there. Elcho grinned maliciously. She was very unhappy, her husband having been persuaded to take a mistress in order to be in the mode, and he neglected her utterly. Lord Ogilvy had been given a regiment through the good offices of the Duke of York. Lochiel? He was disinclined to make any figure in France, but it was understood that the Prince had asked and obtained a similar favour for him. ‘He is the only Scot

that the Prince has asked anything for.' Elcho's voice was hot, vehement, passionate. 'Had he done right he could have got anything done for his followers that he pleased, but instead of that he is behaving so as to make all the French ministers his enemies.'

Lord George frowned. They were speaking in English, their voices lowered, two ruined men, alike in, united by, the bond of exile, of their common loss through the madness of the Rising; but how differently each was facing and enduring his fate. Elcho was prematurely soured, resentful, revengeful. Lord George had seen the end from afar, and when it came was neither surprised nor angered. He counted himself fortunate in having escaped the gibbet or the block, either of which must have been his doom if captured, and was resolutely gathering up the fragments that remained of a life twice sacrificed for the Stuarts. He would scorn to repine or rebel. He remarked dryly that it was unfortunate if the Prince were adding to his ruined adherents' hardships by alienating the government of the country that might ameliorate their exile, although unwilling to provide the men and money needful for another attempt on the throne.

Elcho scowled. 'He is in the hands of the Irish as much as formerly. Kelly, young Sheridan, my Lord Clancarty, that one-eyed braggart—all flatter and mislead him. They have put it into his head (a mighty foolish one, eh, my lord?) that if he got the Scots employment they would not be so dependent upon him as if he kept them poor.'

Lord George shrugged his shoulders. 'That

is pure jealousy. The Irish do not want that the Scots should get a footing in France.' He sighed. The miserable cavils and envies that had honeycombed the Rising seemed as strong as ever after it. 'We must trust that the Prince will learn in time to be less headstrong and easily overpersuaded,' he sighed.

'His Royal Highness will never learn sense.' Elcho's supple mouth sneered. 'What can one expect from a leader who abandons his army after one defeat? I am finished with him and his Cause, and hope to obtain my pardon from the King. And you, my lord?'

'I am convinced that I shall get no favour from the Government.' Lord George's tone was gloomy but resigned. 'I have no intention of asking any. I design to bring over my lady and live quietly. When I see the King, my lord, am I to convey any message from you?'

Elcho reflected that he was still unpardoned, and that Charles owed him fifteen hundred guineas. It might be as well to conciliate King James. 'Assure His Majesty of my duty,' he murmured, 'and say to him that I hope he will excuse me, as the matter presses, if I have taken certain steps for the recovery of my estate without the King's previous knowledge and permission. I look upon that to be a particular which might be of personal advantage to myself, and can be of no disservice to him.'

Lord George was learning hard lessons in his middle years. He had set himself grimly to master patience, toleration, moderation. Seen through the softening haze of distance, the events

of the Rising viewed in retrospect took on milder hues and aspects. The Prince was young, inexperienced, ill-advised and directed. Lord George acknowledged sorrowfully that he had been wrong in expecting the actions and wisdom of a much older man from a hot-headed creature of twenty-five, handicapped by a foreign upbringing and undesirable associates. He himself had not handled Charles too tactfully, he admitted regretfully. He had been guilty of thwarting and contradicting him many times. The outcome of this self-examination and belated remorse was that on his arrival in Rome he gave King James (who received him with the distinction to which his rank and late services entitled him) a vastly different version of the campaign than would have been the case immediately after its disastrous failure. He spoke of the Prince with respect, eulogising his good qualities. He was more than willing to admit his own faults and shortcomings. James, previously apprised by O'Sullivan of Charles's dislike and distrust of Lord George, was touched by Murray's humbling of himself. He was a proud man, and for him to confess himself in the wrong meant very much. King James advised him to call and pay his respects to the Prince when in the neighbourhood of Paris. It never crossed his mind that Charles, his old suspicions and hatred of Lord George fanned afresh by evil counsellors, could mete out to him the humiliating treatment that had been the portion of Elcho.

The Prince's affairs were dragging slowly to a crisis. A tentative offer of James's to dispatch

Henry to the Spanish court was countered instantly by Charles, who went himself. He travelled secretly and hurriedly, confiding the object and outcome of his journey to no one. His retreat to Avignon had sorely perplexed James, sufficiently harassed and distracted by the tales which crept to him of Charles's behaviour in Paris. There were ugly rumours concerning Madame de Talmond and lesser ladies, stories of Charles's open rudeness to Cardinal Tencin and Louis's envoys. He and Henry occupied separate establishments, enough in itself to arouse gossip and comment. Charles's money-affairs were a mystery to James. He had refused the French pension, so must have resources of which his father knew nothing. Nevertheless, James covertly paid into Charles's account at his Paris banker's, Waters', sums that he could ill afford. His dearest Carluccio must not want, but he was beginning to see the Prince, as so many were doomed to do, with clear eyes unblinded by love.

The King's complaints of his son's intimacy with, and confidence in, persons disapproved of by James went unheeded. The Spanish journey culminated in backstairs interviews, secret meetings and negotiations, ending with empty compliments and vague promises. Charles returned to France no better situated than he went. It was dawning upon him with increasing bitterness and certainty that the help from other monarchs on which he had so confidently counted was never to be forthcoming. France and Spain might use him as a thorn in the side of England, a useful puppet and pawn in their unending games of political hazard, but they had no desire to see



him occupying the throne of Great Britain, no intention of aiding him to seat himself thereon. James wrote imploring the headstrong Prince 'to keep well with that Court (Spain) and that of France, whatever their behaviour towards you may be, for whether war or peace, they are equally our only resource.' Charles tossed a powdered head. He had not yet fallen so low as to become a pensioner, a hanger-on, a humble suppliant for his means of support from the Bourbon or Ferdinand VI.

Culloden was a year old.

It was an April evening, mild and windy, smelling of spring. The pinched bodies and starved hearts of many Scottish exiles expanded a little in the softer air that breathed about the alien cities where they were mostly dragging out their stunted lives. Their affairs outwardly were as sombre and lifeless as a ploughed field before spring sowing. The war went on. The Prince, now living at St Ouen, had succeeded in alienating and disappointing his best friends and truest adherents. His haughty rejection of a pension for himself had made Louis and his ministers unwilling to pay the promised amounts to the needy Scots gentlemen whom the Rising had ruined. Sir John Graeme, long in James's service, later with Henry in Paris, and now one of Charles's household, wrote despairingly to the King that the Prince had no means of support, that his affairs resembled 'an immense labyrinth, without an ell of thread to conduct us out of it.' James wrote back drearily that Charles had brought himself into it, and it was not in his

father's power to bring him out. He harped incessantly on Charles's refusal of the French pension. James had privately instructed O'Brien to receive it on the Prince's behalf, and using one-third for Henry, had permitted the rest to accumulate until he saw how Charles proposed to act. Out of this money a sum might be devoted for the benefit of necessitous adherents. Charles, learning the source, refused it curtly.

Charles was in a sombre mood as he attired himself sumptuously for a supper at his brother's house. Henry had invited him ceremoniously, and heart-sick, the Prince turned to one who, although widely separated from him in sympathy, was at least of his own blood. He still clung stubbornly to the Irish—Kelly, O'Sullivan (returned to him from Rome after being knighted secretly by James), young Sheridan. The news that Murray of Broughton's long imprisonment had eventuated in his turning king's evidence was another bitter drop in the Prince's cup. How many might not be brought to the block through Murray's treachery and backsliding? Murray's conduct and defection had dealt Charles a mortal wound. The Prince had loved him, confided in him, relied upon him. He was grown so irritable and suspicious through repeated reverses and disappointments that he now mistrusted everyone with whom he came in contact. His father's recent letters, appealing to him to receive Lord George Murray civilly, met with scant response save veiled threats. 'Lord George's treachery I guessed at all along,' the Prince mused sombrely. 'Is it possible

that he was in a clique with Murray, though Murray pretended and appeared to be otherwise?’

Charles drove in state in a great coach, his gentlemen with him, all the outward forms and grandeur of royalty attending him, but his heart was sore beneath lace and jewels. He sat back against brocaded cushions, with drawn brows and dry, irritable mouth. He was as handsome as ever, but the gay, gallant Charles who had faced hardship, privation, danger in the Highlands and the Hebrides was merged in this fashionable, idle, petulant young man, who outwardly cared for nothing but dress and vain diversion. His mind was obsessed with Lord George. ‘Such a devil should be confined in some castle, without liberty of pen or paper, until he can account to me for his actions, of which, putting it in the best light, one will find several demonstrative acts of disobedience, insolency, and creating dissension.’ The brown eyes, secretive, brooding, stared out on the spring fields, flat and pale in the violet twilight, through which the coach was jolting, but saw nothing. ‘If all around me were less cautious, less politic, I could have Lord George secured directly he sets foot on French soil. He is no friend to me. He only comes to rebuke me, upbraid me for my failure. Did I not hear for certain that he spent the carnival with the Earl Marischal and Elcho, who are neither attached to me? Papa entreats me to receive him at least civilly. What tales did he not take to Rome?’

The long hands, artificially whitened, the fingers burdened with rings, clenched fiercely in a passion of impotent hate.

Prince Henry's abode was lit up from garret to cellar. Gay sounds of music were wafted from it, but the young host himself proved absent. Charles tossed his hat and mantle negligently to an obsequious servant. The Duke? His Royal Highness was not in the house? 'No doubt we are early, gentlemen. Let us wait to take some refreshment until His Royal Highness returns.'

They waited vainly. As the hours passed, bringing neither Henry nor any news of him, Charles's anxiety mounted to frenzy. Had the fate which dogged his own footsteps—assassination—befallen his brother? He forgot past differences, his suspicions and censure of the young Duke. All that he craved was to have Henry restored to him whole and sound. He waited until midnight, racked with apprehension.

The first intelligence of his brother's well-being and safety came in a letter from Henry himself some days afterwards. He wrote apologetically, excusing his hurried and secret departure. He was proceeding to Rome, to visit their father, who had now not seen either of his sons for two years. Charles's cheek flushed at the rebuke dealt to his own want of filial affection and respect. Henry would have confessed his plans, but feared that Charles might hinder his going. He would not remain long in Rome, he promised. He was not well, and craved the change. He had made careful inquiries regarding the journey there and back, and anticipated no danger. Charles waded through the tangle of arguments and explanations. He guessed dimly that something lay behind Henry's action,

something tacitly approved of by James ; but its real magnitude and importance, its effect upon himself, came as a staggering shock when he learned it. In June James wrote from Albano that Henry had entered the Church, and the following month expected to be made a cardinal.

For hours after the receipt of the news the Prince shut himself up alone. What passion, what indignation, what futile rage, what threats and curses he indulged in could only be betrayed by the listening walls of his room. It was as severe a check to his plans, his hopes, his ambitions, as the defeat of Culloden. Charles had always known that his religion was likely to prove the great stumbling-block to his ascending the British throne. As much from policy as conviction he had endeavoured to show that he was in no way bigoted, and during his Scottish expedition had been careful of other beliefs and modes of worship. Now, James and Henry definitely ranged on the side of the Church of Rome, the people of Scotland and England, ay, the whole world, would declare that a Papist prince was no king for them. He lay face downwards on his bed, biting and tearing the embroidered satin coverlet with his strong teeth. Another aspect of the case forced itself into his mind. Henry's new state would preclude him for ever from marriage and the begetting of lawful heirs. In Charles alone there now rested the sole hope of a Stuart succession. He sat up, his eyes dry and blazing. Never would he forgive his brother his treachery, his underhand and secret act. 'Small wonder that he stole from here without bidding me farewell. He



knew that I should wring his guilty intention from him and prevent him. From henceforth he is dead to me!'

His futile rage had exhausted him. He lay for a long time, drawing quick, shallow breaths, caught back half-way each time in a sob. The grey twilight, scented with roses and costly perfumery, crept into the room. Charles stayed very still. At length he dragged himself up and crawled to the door. He rang imperiously and summoned his household. They exclaimed at his dishevelled appearance, but he waved their concern aside. His voice, cracked and husky, held an inflexible sternness. 'In future my brother the Duke of York must not be mentioned at my table. I refuse to hear his name or to have his health drunk. That is all.'

They looked at one another as the door slammed. For a little time they whispered and lingered, daring neither to intrude nor withdraw. From inside the room there came the sound of terrible sobbing. The Prince had not wept like that since the night of the decision to retreat from Derby.

My Lord George Murray's arrival at Paris was eagerly anticipated amongst the Jacobites. Rumours of it crept about, but not until mid-July was it learned for a fact. The news travelled to St Ouen, where a sullen-browed Prince brooded over his wrongs. James's letters of remonstrance and appeal, pleading for Lord George, the wish, tantamount to a command, that the Prince should at least receive Lord George with civility, were angrily ignored. Charles rang

curtly, and demanded a member of his household, to whom he delivered certain orders. A few minutes afterwards a horse and rider were making their way towards Paris.

Lord George had declined the hospitality of his exiled compatriots, most of whom were as poor as himself. He was only here for a few days, in order to pay his respects to the Prince, he explained briefly. Where did His Royal Highness stay? At St Ouen. Then my lord designed to go out there the following morning. He paced the shabby apartment at his humble lodging, frowning over the future. King James had spoken of granting him a small pension. He would never stoop to ask the Government for a pardon which had been given before, after the Fifteen. His Whig brother, assiduously paying his court to Cumberland, would not lift a finger to help him. 'He has even declined to receive my lady,' reflected Lord George, heart-sick and grieved. As brothers their friendship had been a very deep and tender one. 'Before he turned courtier he had vastly different notions.' Lord George was grimly resolved to settle in Flanders, to do his utmost that his children's future should not suffer; to make amends, by an increasing devotion and tenderness, to the woman who had linked her life with his and never once reproached him for his part in the ill-starred and disastrous rebellion. Lord George's thoughts strayed to the Prince. In spite of himself his pulses quickened at the prospect of seeing once more that vivid creature whose charm he unwillingly acknowledged, but to which he had never succumbed. The Prince would be changed, older, graver, no

doubt, but he himself was changed also. 'It is unlikely that I can serve him further,' Lord George Murray mused, 'but at least he will know that my sword is at his service.'

He heard a knock at the street door. His stern face softened, his mind anticipating some fellow-exile, eager for news of home. The slatternly landlady came in. A gentleman was outside, wishful to speak with milord.

Lord George, a little puzzled, went to the door. It was a warm, moonless night, the narrow, ill-paved street steeped in a blue darkness. He made out a horse beyond the pavement, and a man's tall figure, hat in hand, upon the door-step. The two were unknown to each other, but Mr Stafford had heard many tales of my Lord George Murray from his young master—his rudeness, his insolence, his treachery, his overbearing ways, and a myriad other bad qualities, all enumerated by an excitable and prejudiced Charles. He gasped a little. Instead of a peat-smelling, kilted boor, with a sly eye and unpleasant manner, alternately blustering and sycophantic, here stood a tall, dignified, middle-aged Scottish gentleman, plainly, almost shabbily attired, but bearing about him an unmistakable air of race, of fine breeding, of long descent. 'You asked for me, sir?' The voice was deep, stern, yet not unpleasant. 'I am George Murray. But will you not come in?'

'I—I cannot, I thank your lordship.' Mr Stafford caught himself stammering like a school-boy. 'I am of the household of the Prince of Wales, and—and——' His errand stuck in his throat.

'Ah! I design, sir, to call and pay my dutiful respects to His Royal Highness early to-morrow.'

Mr Stafford stood, his head hanging, his fingers playing with the ribbon on his hat. 'The Prince has heard that your lordship was come to town. His Royal Highness desires that you will not come near him, my lord, for he will not see you.'

A little wind whispered in the silence of the street. 'Is this all the message, sir?' Lord George asked very quietly.

'No.' Mr Stafford's breath caught. 'You will do well to leave Paris as soon as you can.'

Lord George waited with folded arms and furrowed brow. 'May I ask your name, sir?'

'It can convey nothing to your lordship.' He added desperately: 'I can only assure you that I would not have delivered such a message without His Royal Highness's positive orders.'

'That I well believe, sir. Pray, do not feel any discomposure in thus doing your duty. I am well acquaint with His Royal Highness.'

There was a pause. The horse pricked its ears and neighed impatiently. Mr Stafford stepped back, the crude light from the passage behind Lord George's tall, motionless figure falling on his own face. It was scarlet, but Lord George's colour had not changed. Only a deeper sadness in the melancholy eyes betrayed the mortal wound just dealt to him. They remained confronting one another, each sick with shame for the Prince both served.

'My name is Stafford, my lord.' The messenger spoke in a hurried whisper.

Lord George inclined his head. 'Pray, sir, acquaint His Royal Highness that I have come to France with no other design but to pay my respects to him, and that I shall punctually obey

his orders. 'This I hope, sir, you will assure His Royal Highness of.'

Mr Stafford bowed. Then, on an impulse, he thrust out his hand and wrung Lord George Murray's.

Directly the horse's hoofs ceased to sound, Lord George returned to the room which he had lately quitted. He drew writing materials towards him, and set down a brief memorandum of what had just occurred. 'Not to trust too much to my memory,' he muttered. His eyes were bewildered. He would have to write to the King, informing His Majesty that the Prince had not merely refused to receive him, but had even sent a veiled threat that he would be wiser to leave Paris immediately. What lay behind Charles's action? How much of wounded pride and shame goaded him, linked to a miserable shrinking from possible reproaches? 'He need have had no fear,' Lord George thought bitterly. 'I have learned my lesson.' Suddenly a vision rose before him of a mean room reeking of peat-smoke, of clinging hands and a broken appeal. 'If you should be brought face to face with the Prince, my lord, remember that a dying man's last request was that you should deal gently with His Royal Highness.' Lord George shivered. 'I should have kept my word, my lord Duke, but the Prince himself denies me the opportunity.'

The poor room was very still. From far off there came the noise of Paris, muffled by night and distance. Lord George sat with close-shut lips and clenched hands. For the Prince he had sacrificed everything—his home, his position, his prospects, jeopardised his children's futures, ruined



his wife's peace of mind and prosperity. He himself had escaped with bare life from the overwhelming catastrophe following the Rising. For all thanks he received insolence, rebuff, menace of imprisonment, ingratitude, false suspicion, amounting to open accusation of treachery. 'I, who risked my life repeatedly all through the campaign. I, who led his army to such victories as it obtained, who, if I did not all the good I would, I am sure I did all I could.'

He sat motionless, seeing before him a tired young face in the grey dawn a few hours ere Drum Mossie. Suddenly his head dropped to the table and rested on his folded arms.

Madame de Talmond was having supper with His Royal Highness. The Prince, in violet silk, blazing with orders and jewels, made a regal picture at the overloaded, extravagant table. The lady, her sumptuous figure fully exposed in its low-cut gown of peach-coloured satin, her bare arms and bosom shining with gems, rouge and powder artfully disguising the lines pencilled by years and temper on a still lovely face, was in her gayest mood. She pelted Charles with bon-bons and rose-petals, rallied him on his gloom and poor appetite, and flirted so outrageously with the gentlemen of the household that Charles, roused to sudden jealousy, desired them to withdraw. Alone with Madame, he relapsed into moody silence. Under her arched brows she noted the quantity of wine which he consumed recklessly. 'Eh, my friend, but you are of a thirst to-night,' she commented.

Charles scowled. 'What is left me but the drink?'

‘Many things, *mon cher*.’ Her eyes were soft in the candle-light. ‘*Par exemple*, myself.’

He gave her a look that would have made most women leave him. It was casual, insolent, calculating, contemptuous. A great ruby on her full bosom rose and fell faster for a few seconds before she mastered her wrath. ‘But your Royal Highness is not too polite this evening,’ she told him. ‘What ails you, Carluccio?’

The Prince frowned still more at the name. Only King James and Sheridan had been privileged to use it. ‘What ails me? *Mon Dieu!* you to ask that who know better than anybody the treatment I have received at the hands of Louis and his craven ministers!’

His voice was loud, thick. Her glance went in alarm to the door. In her life of courts and counter-plots she had early learned to detect and suspect a spy under every quilted petticoat, behind each patched face and smiling mouth. ‘Be careful!’ she breathed. She was suddenly grave, sobered.

‘Of what?’

‘Everything.’ Her eyes narrowed. ‘I have long had it in my mind to warn you, *mon ami*.’

Charles yawned ostentatiously. ‘Monstrous kind, *ma belle*. *Comment?*’

Her voice sounded sharp, resentful. ‘Do you never calculate what the end will be?’

‘The end? The end?’

‘Yes. The war is not to continue for ever. After the peace——’ She paused significantly.

The Prince’s hand shook as he poured himself out more wine. ‘You are as cheerful as my father, Madame. He writes continually—*mon*

*Dieu*, but how he wearies me—over and over the same. He sees me on the brink of a precipice. I have only France to depend upon. I must not offend the ministry by asking too great things, lest I end by getting nothing.’ He lifted his shoulders. ‘He reminds me that it is no question of where I may go, but where I shall be allowed to stay. *Enfin*, I think His Majesty tires a little of advising me. In a recent letter he said that he would only continue to pray for me.’

He leant back in his chair in a fit of sour mirth, but Madame de Talmond did not laugh. When he sat up again and fell to floating rose-leaves in his wine, she spoke bluntly. ‘*Mon ami*, what I am about to say is like disagreeable medicine—for your Royal Highness’s good. It is quite possible that you may have to leave France.’

The Prince’s eyes blazed. ‘Pray, why?’

She looked down. ‘If there is peace, that may be one of the stipulations made to France. Recollect, after her losses at sea, she is in no position to dictate terms to Britain. The other powers may vote for your expulsion, and goad France into refusing to allow you an asylum on any territory of hers or theirs.’

His eyes met her look across the candle-lit, flower-decked board. A third of the sum flung away on the delicacies which both had barely touched that evening would have been wealth to the Prince’s starving adherents. Paris, Boulogne, Ghent, the little towns of Holland, Flanders, Germany, Sweden, where perchance living might be cheaper, had given poor sanctuary

to men who had been lairds of fruitful acres and leaders of great clans. Their dependants hung about taverns and mean lodgings, fain of a stray coin, or opportunity of earning bread. In London and Carlisle heads once set proudly on the shoulders of men glad to die for Prince Charles withered above tall gates. If they, the dead or the ruined, could see him now, half-tipsy, spending money on women like Madame de Talmond, quarrelling with his best friends, deliberately exasperating the ministers of a country fast beginning to find him a troublesome and unprofitable guest. Well might the grieved King, his advice neglected, his letters frequently unread, cease to constrain or direct him, withdrawing more and more into a world of prayer and futile hopes.

The Prince handed Madame de Talmond to her magnificent coach just as Mr Stafford, grim of mouth, rode up to the door. Charles listened impatiently to his brief account of his embassy, then turned away without a word. That night he dismissed all from his presence except Kelly, whose dour silence presently fretted his nerves. He broke it by asking peevishly, 'Do you not think, Kelly, that I was perfectly right in refusing to receive Lord George Murray?'

The Irishman looked at him with shrewd, humorous eyes set in a lined, pouched face. 'Your Royal Highness was first prejudiced against Lord George, sir, by one since proved a rank traitor,' he rejoined quietly.

'*Hé*, John Murray. Poor Lord Lovat was undone by his rascality.' The Prince sighed,

then added in a sharper tone: 'But my Lord George, Kelly, has been in his time the ruin of the affair. His villainy was proved out of all dispute.'

Kelly said nothing. He went on sorting and tidying papers. Charles, partly undressed, his wig discarded, his fair hair hanging loose and unpowdered, came to his side. 'I could not bear to see Lord George,' he whispered. 'Eh, how the sight of his face would bring all back to me, the failure, the retreat, Derby, Drummossie.' He stood with clenched hands. 'If he had not forced retreat upon me at Derby, I might be in St James's now.'

'He turned your Royal Highness back. You refuse to receive him. Then are you not quits, sir?' Kelly's tone was dry, unpitying.

The Prince made no reply. He stood at the window, which he had wrenched open, the night-breeze blowing in on his bared throat. 'Shall I ever be quits with fate?' he demanded sombrely.



### CHAPTER III.

‘The face of the King’s servants grew greater than the King.

He tricked them and they trapped him and drew round him in a ring . . .

We saw their shoulders moving to menace and discuss. And some were pure and some were vile, but none took heed of us.’

G. K. CHESTERTON.

THE end of the war loomed in sight. The belligerents, heartily sick of long-continued hostilities beneficial to none, agreed to a conference proposed by the King of France. It opened at Aix-la-Chapelle in March of 1748, and indirectly decided Charles Edward’s fate.

The Prince was frankly incredulous of peace, or of any ill sequel to himself therefrom. He went on his way, airy, unconcerned, refusing to discuss the happenings at Aix-la-Chapelle, dismissing the unpalatable topic when any allusion was made to it by a change of subject, or by breaking into a strain of song. He had given up his more modest residences for a magnificent hotel on the Quai de Théatin, the furnishings of which provided ample evidence that he had no intention of tactfully departing. He declared that he was wishful to be near the theatre and opera-house, both of these enjoying his frequent patronage. At the opera he appeared in semi-royal state, loudly applauded by the audience and ogled by numerous silly women, many of whom

had crossed the Channel expressly to obtain a glimpse of him. His folly and extravagance were unlimited. He forced a Paris goldsmith to execute his order for a service of gold plate, worth a hundred thousand francs, before that of the King. Having obtained it, he entertained Madame de Talmond, the Duc de Bouillon, and a crowd of nobilities and celebrities to an ostentatious feast. The Prince de Talmond, asserting himself for once, forbade Charles his house. His Royal Highness had to be removed from the door, as he was once led off the field at Culloden, impotent and protesting. A strange story crept about of Madame de Montbazon and the Prince's pistol-shots.

Money, some of which he obtained by dipping into the Loch Arkaig hoard, was squandered recklessly. He sat to Le Moin, the celebrated sculptor, for a bust in marble—a proud, haughty head, still with the halo of his great adventure round it. Those who compared it with the vivid original pronounced the former ‘singularly like.’ La Tour, the famous French artist, painted his portrait in all its disdainful beauty. He courted offence by giving orders for a medal to be struck with his profile on one side, and on the other a figure of Britannia and a fleet of war vessels. The medal bore two inscriptions in Latin—‘Charles, Prince of Wales,’ and ‘The love and hope of Britain.’ Paris buzzed with comment. The French ministers, who saw a covert insult to their country which had suffered heavy naval losses through the war, were highly indignant. Only Louis shrugged his shoulders and smiled. He pacified the distracted goldsmith, bade him

carry out the Prince's order first, and ultimately allowed his treasury to settle the bill.

The French nobility, hot at the slight put upon them, were less complaisant. The Prince of Conti, proudest, and accounted wittiest, man of his day, came face to face with Charles, the centre of a chattering, idle crowd, one morning in the Luxembourg gardens. His air of pleasantry hid a lurking sneer as he observed that the device of the medal did not apply so aptly as persons might at first suppose. The British navy had not shown any particular friendship for His Royal Highness? The exquisite paused, toying with a snuff-box. The group of empty heads round Charles waited in greedy expectation.

The answer, accompanied by the 'vermilion flush,' the heritage of Queen Clementina to her son, came instantly: '*Cela est vrai, Prince! mais je suis nonobstant l'ami de la flotte contre tous ses ennemis; comme je regarderai toujours la gloire d'Angleterre comme la mienne, et sa gloire est dans la flotte.*' Conti retired worsted, but the incident did not add to Charles's popularity with the ministry. Later, he was furious at the arrival in Paris of the Earl of Sussex and Lord Cathcart as hostages of Great Britain until certain stipulations in a hated treaty should be carried out. Charles spoke his sentiments publicly. 'Shameful concession, unworthy of a ministry not abandoned to all sense of honour and virtue; but if ever I mount the throne of my ancestors, Europe shall see me use my utmost endeavours to force France in her turn to send hostages into England.'

The Prince's visits to court ceased abruptly at the end of April with the signing of the

preliminaries of a general peace. The spring died, and summer took her place, but Charles was still in Paris, despite the most abundant evidence that it was desirable that he should betake himself elsewhere. He had asseverated his determination never to return to Rome, or to live in any of the Pope's dominions. He declared vehemently that rather would he take refuge in some hole in a rock.

It was October again. Outside Paris the last leaves were falling in the dark.

The sad-coloured month saw the passing of one of Charles's most faithful friends. After a brief illness, Lochiel gave up the burden of his exiled life, and slipped away from his reluctantly-accepted French favours, leaving a widow, six children, and innumerable members of his ruined clan to the nebulous support of the Stuarts. Lochiel had stood steadfast in the face of temptation. He shrank in horror from the suggestion made that the Duke of Cumberland, by the Cameron chief's submission, would obtain a pardon for him. His one hope, his one aim, had been a restoration, and he died with the dream unfulfilled. The Prince roused himself from his own pressing and tangled affairs to exert his influence on behalf of Lochiel's sixteen-year-old son. Another friend was lost to him in the person of Sir John Graeme, who prudently, despite ill-spelt but sincere remonstrances on the part of the Prince, cut himself adrift from the wreck of the Stuart Cause before too late.

On October 7th the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was concluded and signed. Charles's pride, raw

from frustrated ambition, was touched to the quick at what he considered the base injustice of the fifth article of the Quadruple Alliance being inserted therein by the contracting parties without dissension or limitation. This stipulated that no member of the House of Stuart was to be allowed to reside within the territories belonging to any of the parties to the treaty. Switzerland refused Louis's suggestion of a suitable establishment for the Prince in Fribourg. James, privately approached by the French king in a tactful missive, proposing that he should send his royal and paternal commands to Charles to leave France, acquiesced, but the Prince was still stubborn and immovable. He declared that the letter was not James's. Some people were of opinion that he did not trouble to read it. The obscure motives driving him to act as he did puzzled Paris. Was it in subtle revenge for having been deceived as to French aid during his expedition, or a wish to show the world his treatment by the French ministry, to let them see that he was not their tool, and had no intention of becoming it? Nobody but himself knew why he refused to go. D'Argenson reported him as furious and obstinate in everything. He boasted that he had in his possession letters of Louis, in which the King promised never to desert him. He uttered hysterical threats that he would commit suicide sooner than be expelled from the country. Full of fire and fury, he swore that he would withstand a siege in his house like Charles XII. at Bender.

Louis, still smiling and shrugging, but inwardly raging, dispatched Cardinal Tencin to interview



the recalcitrant Prince. He himself was weary of Charles's written protests, disagreeable reminders of the previous treaty signed at Fontainebleau three years before, by which Louis and Charles were mutually pledged to support one another's interests. Louis resented also the eagerness and applause with which the populace encouraged Charles in his foolish decision to remain at Paris, defying the powers which decreed that he was to depart. The Cardinal was voluble, vague, negative. He utilised a multitude of choice arguments to convince the scented, powdered, sumptuous figure before him that Louis felt deep regret at having to agree to the disagreeable articles of the treaty, in particular the one securing the succession of the Crown of Great Britain to the House of Hanover. He hinted that the treaty might not long endure, and that the Prince, if he vanished gracefully now, would possibly very shortly find himself again on French soil with considerably more favourable prospects. Charles's answers were brief, evasive, unsatisfactory. The Cardinal read disbelief in those brown eyes that had beguiled so many. He reported his non-success to Louis, who made no move for another fortnight, in the hope that Charles would leave of his own accord. The Duc de Gesvres, governor of Paris, described by a contemporary opinion as having 'almost as much head as a sparrow,' next interviewed him, with no better result. Charles received the emissary gallantly, one long hand resting on his sword-hilt. He announced haughtily that he had been taken by surprise and had had insufficient time in which to consider the matter. A second visit, during

which the Duke urged compliance with Louis's wishes, met with a refusal and the proud reminder that there was a treaty before that of Aix-la-Chapelle, between the Prince and the King of France, from which Charles could not honourably depart. 'I do not understand, sir. Pray, be more explicit,' begged the French nobleman.

Charles turned away. 'There is no explanation, Monsieur le Duc. Be good enough to carry that answer to your master. He will comprehend its meaning.'

The Prince was fretted and driven. Despite his brave front, his appearance of unconcern, he felt hourly more friendless and powerless. The Earl Marischal, appealed to to come to Paris and aid His Royal Highness to conduct his affairs, had returned a cold refusal. He was too old to meddle further in politics. Charles clung more and more to Kelly. He had insulted and estranged his father's agents—Sempil, Balhaldie, O'Brien—whom he regarded as spies upon his own movements. He had never forgiven James for showing his (Charles's) letters to O'Brien, now Lord Lismore. Henry remained ignored and unforgiven. His piteous letters lay unread, unanswered. Charles was weary of the women who managed him and quarrelled with one another over him—Madame de Talmond, Madame de Guéménée, Madame de Montbazou, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon—and of the ministers who goaded him. De Gesvres came again, this time bearing a letter from Louis containing a blank order for an annual allowance. Charles was to be pleased to fill in the amount himself.

The Prince read through the letter twice. He looked up over the edge of the perfumed sheet

at the figure before him, and spoke coldly. 'I wish no pecuniary favours from His Most Christian Majesty. Neither is it consistent with my honour to comply with the King's demand that I should leave French territory.'

The Duke looked uneasily about the sumptuous apartment. It seemed to contain everything that was costly, exotic, out of season. Its luxury formed a fitting framework to the stately young man standing with his back to a cabinet, his fair head outlined against brocade-hung walls. 'I would beg you, monsieur, to consider your resolution,' he murmured.

Charles coloured furiously. The subtle dropping of his generally conceded title of Royal Highness first by de Puysieux, the successor to D'Argenson, who at least had shown himself friendly to the Prince, had been copied by every one of Louis's envoys. 'In future, Monsieur le Duc, though I shall treat with respect the representatives of the King, I must decline receiving any communications from any person but His Majesty himself.'

The Duke elevated horrified hands. '*Mon Dieu, monsieur!* that is impossible, as you have given over going to court; unless, indeed, you expect, what I can scarcely suppose you do'—the gemmed fists wagged helplessly—'that His Majesty is to come to the Quai de Théatin in person?'

Charles shrugged his shoulders. '*Enfin donc, Monsieur le Duc, je n'ai plus rien à dire que ce que j'ai déjà dit.*' He bowed ceremoniously. '*Pardonnez-moi—j'ai quelque affaire.*' He walked unconcernedly from the room, leaving the Duke gaping and aghast.

The Comte de Maurepas met with no better success when he visited Charles to reason with him over the stubbornness and stupidity of his conduct in resisting the King's wishes. As Charles showed no signs of acquiescing in them, De Maurepas told him bluntly that delay only meant that the ministers would be compelled to use force. The bare suggestion sent the Prince into one of his passions. With scarlet cheeks and flashing eyes he exclaimed, 'The ministers! the ministers! If you wish to do me a favour, Monsieur le Comte, have the goodness to tell the King your master that I was born to defeat all the designs of his ministers.' He stood with heaving chest and trembling lips, his hand at his throat. The Count bowed and withdrew.

Charles himself signed the warrant for his expulsion by his own words and acts. The ministry brought pressure on Louis, who reluctantly put his signature to an order for the Prince's arrest. '*Pauvre Prince! qu'il est difficile pour un roi d'être un véritable ami,*' he sighed. The news ran like wild-fire over Paris, provoking gossip, expostulation, incredulity. The most unmoved person was Charles himself. He did not believe it, he declared. 'Pish-pish, an idle rumour,' he cried hastily. 'They know that I will obey my father.' Even the hint from a highly placed official, whom he encountered whilst strolling in the Tuileries, that he would be arrested immediately if he did not forestall matters by a prompt departure, had no effect. Charles smiled and shrugged his shoulders, and gave directions that a box should be reserved for him at the opera that evening. Only a week before D'Argenson

had seen him there, as he reported, 'very gay and very beautiful, admired by all the public.' The defection of four of his household, who left him, either at the instigation of the ministry or because they resented James's complaint of false counsellors underlying Charles's obstinacy, failed to alarm or depress him. 'The rats desert the sinking ship,' he told Neil MacEachain. 'You will accompany me this evening, *mon cher*.'

The night of December 10th was dark and starless. At a quarter-past five the Prince's carriage swung out of the courtyard of his hotel and proceeded towards the opera-house. In addition to Neil, three of his gentlemen were with him—Henry Goring, young Sheridan, and Sir James Harrington. All four were in a state of nervous apprehension and expectancy, their tremors not allayed by a whispered warning from a passer-by during a temporary stoppage in the Rue St Honoré: 'Prince, return. They are going to arrest you. The Palais Royal is beset.' Charles merely smiled. He leaned back against the soft upholstery of his costly conveyance, his hands linked loosely in the marten muff for which he had recently paid ninety-six livres. He wore peach-coloured silk, with lace at throat and wrists. The price of both would have relieved many necessitous exiles for months. He stared out of the window beside him at the faint snow-flakes breaking the dark, the cheek thus presented to his companions showing no fluctuations of colour above the fashionable patch at the corner of the full, compressed lips. When he spoke it was airily, upon indifferent topics.



The coach turned into the cul-de-sac leading to the opera-house. The door of the vehicle was flung open, the steps let down, and the Prince alighted leisurely. His expensively shod foot had barely touched the pavement before he found himself surrounded by six dark figures. They seized him, lifting him bodily off the ground, despite his rigidity. (He was too proud to struggle.) As they bore him off he was conscious of Harrington's horrified face; young Sheridan, with all an Irishman's delight in a fracas, hitting a stalwart sergeant on the jaw; Neil MacEachain, striving to break from his captors and follow his Prince. At the end of the passage leading to the Palais Royal, Monsieur de Vaudreuil, major of the blue guards, awaited him, with other officers. He addressed the stiff figure in the arms of the grenadiers: 'Prince, I arrest you in the name of the King, my master.'

Charles, at the most humiliating moment of his whole life, showed all the dignity of a king's son. 'The manner is a little violent,' he answered calmly. The coolness, the superb indifference of tone and manner reddened the officer's cheek. He did not like his task in any case.

The Prince was carried into a ground-floor room. At the demand for his arms he replied, 'I shall not deliver them to you, but you may take them.' The major fidgeted and consulted his colleagues. He whispered to the sergeants, whose hands were presently busy about the silk-clad body. Their search produced a sword, a two-bladed knife, and a pair of pistols, all of which were promptly confiscated. Charles smiled, despite the deathly pallor of humiliation on his

face. 'You must not be surprised at seeing me with pistols,' he drawled, 'having constantly carried them ever since I returned from Scotland.'

The major coughed, and produced a formidable length of black silk ribbon, with which he gave directions to bind the Prince. Charles's pallor was exchanged for a flush of mingled rage and apprehension as he realised the new indignity about to be undergone. De Vaudreuil murmured that the precaution was only taken to avoid his making an attempt upon his life or other people's. Charles's look was scornful. 'I am not used to such proceedings, and I shall not say whether they are justifiable or not; but the disgrace cannot affect me, it can only affect your master.' He added sarcastically: 'You have my weapons, monsieur. You need not fear that I shall hurt myself or any other person. In any case, I should have imagined that so many people'—his scornful brown gaze swept the group—'were quite sufficient to guard one unarmed man without resorting to such a step.'

De Vaudreuil hum'd and ha'd. Finally he went to consult the Duc de Biron, waiting in a post-chaise outside. On his return he repeated his orders that the Prince was to be bound. He expressed his chagrin at having to undertake such a disagreeable office. Charles's brows lifted scornfully. '*Vous faites là un vilain métier. Est-ce là ce pays si poli! Je n'éprouverais pas ceci au Maroc; j'avais meilleure opinion de la nation française.*' He added brokenly: 'France promised me an asylum: if I had only a morsel of bread I would share it with a friend.'

The shameful command was carried out promptly. Thirty-six ells of ribbon, three fingers broad, pinioned Charles's arms to his body, his hands behind his back, and swathed his lower limbs so tightly that movement was an impossibility. He bore the degradation calmly, even philosophically, merely inquiring with disdain: 'Have you not enough now?' He gave De Vaudreuil a menacing look as the officer answered: 'Not yet.' Firmly trussed, he was lifted like a parcel, carried out head first, and placed in a coach. De Vaudreuil and two other officers took their places opposite, a strong escort of cavalry accompanied the vehicle, while six grenadiers with fixed bayonets mounted it. The journey through the thoroughfares of Paris then proceeded, the Prince, pale, silent, proud, but in his heart alarmed and afraid. When they halted at the barrier of the Faubourg St Antoine, he demanded with cold sarcasm: 'Where are we going? Are you taking me to Hanover?'

De Vaudreuil, decidedly uncomfortable, answered that they were merely changing horses in order not to be so long on the road. 'If your Royal Highness would give your parole——' he ventured uncertainly.

Charles's head, the only part of him that he could move, went up haughtily. 'You refused to accept it before, monsieur, so I now refuse to give it.' He added, choking: 'I should not wonder to be so treated had I been at Hanover.'

The coach eventually pulled up within the courtyard of the Château de Vincennes. Monsieur de Chatelet, its governor, came forward hurriedly.

He was an old acquaintance of the Prince's, and his peaked, sallow face crimsoned as he saw His Royal Highness's plight. Charles significantly indicated his bonds, and exclaimed, 'I should be glad to embrace you, my friend. Come to me, you see I cannot go to you.' De Chatelet, horrified, expostulated for a few minutes with De Vaudreuil. The silken bonds were then cut, and Charles, head erect, walking stiffly after their cramping embrace, was escorted into the château. The place felt dank, cold, prison-like. He put aside his own apprehensions to remark with haughty impatience, 'Come, come, my friend,' as the governor padded at his heels, lamenting incessantly. He mounted fifty-seven stone steps, and then entered an apartment some seven feet wide and eight long. The furniture consisted of a matted chair and a wretched camp-bed. The Prince surveyed the meagre space and appointments assigned to him with cool, amused gaze. 'This is not very magnificent,' he remarked. Certain scrawled designs upon the walls attracted his attention. He strolled forward and examined them, inquiring their meaning. He shrugged his shoulders at the answer that they were the work of a priest who had long occupied the chamber. His fears were clamouring at his staunch heart, but no hint of them showed in his aspect. De Vaudreuil, meeting the bright, defiant eyes, murmured to De Chatelet that the Prince had not been thoroughly searched. The governor asked nervously if His Royal Highness had any weapon remaining with which he could attempt his life.

Charles thrust a hand into his breast and

scornfully produced a pair of compasses. 'Upon my word of honour, monsieur, I have nothing more.' The two Frenchmen shook their heads over the instrument. It was a curious companion for a young man to take with him to the performance of an opera. De Vaudreuil drew De Chatelet aside, and they conferred in whispers. The upshot of their conference was a second search of the Prince's person, even stricter than the first had been. The only discovery that De Vaudreuil made was a pocket-book, warm from contact with the white skin. Charles uttered no remonstrances in words as it was taken from him, but the proud, expressive face was hot with indignation.

He sat in the mean chair, his arms folded, his brown eyes glaring at the two. De Chatelet observed nervously that as the room was so small the Prince would be unable to walk about in it. His Royal Highness, he understood, was accustomed to take a good deal of exercise, and the confinement might be prejudicial to his health. Charles relaxed so far as to explain that instead of taking one turn he should take four. De Chatelet brightened. There was a large room beside this one, the door of which should be opened, if His Royal Highness would give his word——

The Prince interrupted passionately, his eyes flashing: 'I shall not give my word. I have given it once already, and it was not taken; I shall therefore give it no more.' All the suffering and shame of this dreadful evening rushed over him in a torrent. He glanced round him with wild, trapped gaze.



De Chatelet collapsed on his knees in tears. 'I am undone,' he wailed. 'Monseigneur, this is the most unfortunate day of my whole life.'

The Prince, softened, gave him a long hand. 'I know your friendship for me. I shall never confound the friend with the governor. Do the duties of your office.' He spoke graciously, but coldly.

De Chatelet crawled to his feet and meekly inquired when the Prince would be pleased to take some supper. Charles had no appetite. It was early, for the scene at the opera-house and the drive to the château had been quickly over. He answered that he had dined well not long before, and would call for something when he had a mind to eat. Four French officers had been appointed his guards. The strangeness, the awkwardness of the position was apparently felt more by them than their prisoner. They responded nervously and uncomfortably to Charles's easy civilities. He strolled about the confined space, talking graciously and affably to all except De Vaudreuil. The Prince ignored him as if he did not exist. Once he halted and abruptly inquired how his attendants had been treated. 'Have you bound my Englishmen as you did me?' He stretched his long arms, still stiff from their recent restrictions. 'An Englishman is not used to be bound. He is not made for that purpose.' He resented the silence which was the sole answer that met him. He rattled on: 'If you have treated the Chevalier Harrington in the same manner you treated me, I heartily pity the poor man. He is fat, and must have suffered a good deal.'

All his queries and half-tragic raillery received no response. Finally, he flung himself down on the mean bed, still in his tumbled finery, but sleep was an impossibility. Late in the evening Neil MacEachain was permitted to join him. He had previously declined to be waited on. 'I long ago learned to be my own valet, gentlemen.' Neil whispered that Stafford, Sheridan, Goring, and Sir James Harrington, with others of the household and all the servants, were in the Bastille. The news disturbed the Prince acutely, keeping him wakeful, fearful. When at last exhaustion sent him into a light sleep it proved so restless and uneasy that the officers hurried to his bedside, alarmed by his crying and broken talk. The room was still pitch-black when he awoke and asked the time. Six o'clock, they told him. Charles smiled faintly. 'The nights seem here to be somewhat long,' he said.

The dark hours went on. Neil, dozing uncomfortably, was wakened by a faint lament. 'Ah, my faithful Highlanders, from you I never would have received such treatment. Would to God I were still among you.' Charles's pride was broken at last. He had borne all the overwhelming humiliations of the evening with a high head and scornful disdain, but alone with Neil his wretchedness was allowed full sway. Even during his worst dangers and severest privations in Scotland at least he had been free. He moved his cramped limbs uneasily, hating the door and walls which barred him from liberty. 'Oh, Scotland, Scotland!' he moaned.

Neil crept to his side. 'Sir?'

The Prince sobbed his name. 'Oh, Neil, Neil!'

'Your Royal Highness will be ill. You would not eat your supper.'

'Could I touch their damned food?' Charles asked fiercely. He had rejected it with contumely, despite his hunger. He clung to Neil, the days of desperate hiding, of climbing with sore feet up unfriendly hill-sides, of crouching in wet heather, and sleeping under the stars together quick in his memory. 'Oh, my Highlanders, my Highlanders!' he repeated wretchedly.

Neil's voice came to him with gentle reproach. 'We all thought that your Royal Highness had forgotten your Highlanders, sir.'

'Neil! Neil!'

The little room was very quiet in the paling winter dawn. The Prince laid his head upon Neil's shoulder, his cold hands clinging to the MacDonald's. 'Could I ever forget?' His tones were weak, quivering. 'All that Scotland has suffered, all the burnings and deaths and the shame of Culloden are never out of my thoughts. If I jest and dance and go to gaieties it is only that so I may forget such things.' He cried bitterly: 'Better for me if I had fallen at Culloden.'

Better for him indeed, but his forty years' pilgrimage in the desert of thwarted hopes and broken ambitions was written instead.

Sheer hunger drove him to take food next day. He swallowed some soup as disdainfully as if it had been poisoned. The French officers, over whom he managed to exert the spell of his old charm, declared vehemently that they would

sooner resign their commissions than mount guard any longer. Charles laughed, and yielded to Neil's persuasions that he would eat his dinner. Unfortunately, the reaction after the miseries of the previous night, the enormous amount of self-control necessary to sustain his appearance of proud indifference throughout, combined with eating plentifully following upon hours of fasting, produced disastrous results. Charles was attacked by violent sickness. He lay reduced and enfeebled, a pitiful figure in his disordered bravery, cold, shivering, shuddering with nausea, no longer caring what befell him. Neil tended him, talking to him in soft Gaelic whispers. A few hours' fresh air, when he was permitted to walk in the garden, somewhat restored him, and a letter written to the King of France, promising to leave French territory, procured his release on Sunday morning. From Fontainebleau, whither he drove in a coach, followed by post-chaises containing the relieved and delighted Sheridan and Stafford, Charles dispatched an impertinent note to an acquaintance at Paris, announcing that his head was still upon his shoulders, and had never been off them. At Avignon, which he reached on a chill December morning, he wrote a few brief lines to James, stating that he was in perfect health—'notwithstanding the unheard of barbarous and inhuman treatment I met with.' Upon the surface Charles might jest and smile, but his heart was well-nigh breaking. He looked about him, and saw a dark road at every side.

My Lady Inverness had grown stout and lethargic since the days when as Mrs Hay she

caused covert suspicions in the mind of Queen Clementina as to her relations with King James. Her brother, my Lord Dunbar, formerly Prince Charles's tutor Murray, living in Avignon, having fallen under James's displeasure, shared her lethargy, and enjoyed his bed. Great was his surprise when aroused in it at seven A.M. one December dawn, dark and drizzling, with the information that an Irish officer wanted to speak to him. My lord yawned prodigiously and adjusted his nightcap. Let the young man come up. He parted the bed curtains, and blinked curiously at the tall figure standing there. There was something—an air, a touch of unconscious arrogance—which belied the plain uniform. The young man smiled. 'You have forgotten me, Murray? Pardon, I should have said my Lord Dunbar.'

My lord was out of bed and kneeling to kiss the extended hand. His eyes were blurred, for it was a great moment. The headstrong, beautiful child of whom he had had the early charge, the long-legged boy that stayed as his memory of the Prince, had grown into this magnificent creature, straight-backed, slim, erect as a young pine, with all the grace and charm of the fated Stuarts haloing him. 'Your Royal Highness?' he stammered.

'Ay.' Charles smiled. 'I have come to put myself upon you, my lord, until my affairs adjust themselves somewhat.'

'I am honoured, sir. May I ask how your Royal Highness is attended?'

'Only by Mr Sheridan and an officer in French service.' Thanks to the Prince, Neil had obtained



a commission in Lord Ogilvy's regiment. 'I design to remain incognito until my servants and baggage can reach me.'

'Then, if your Royal Highness would accept of such entertainment as my sister can give you, sir——'

Charles shrugged his shoulders. 'That will do very well.'

Avignon was dull, a city infested with Jacobite exiles and under papal jurisdiction. If Charles imagined that he would be left in peace there he found himself vastly mistaken. The flood of indignant sympathy which had followed the public arrest in Paris, the lampoons, remonstrances, reproaches, directed at Louis and his ministers in consequence of the Prince's expulsion soon died down. Missing the empty gaieties of Paris, Charles endeavoured to introduce boxing into Avignon, but the ecclesiastical authorities of the town objected, and he was soon requested to leave. This time he did not wait to be turned out. On a February morning, with the smell of spring in the air and birds calling tentatively, he rode forth of Avignon with Henry Goring, into the darkness and obscurity which were to hide him for many years.

## CHAPTER IV.

‘The experience

In former trials, sir, both of mine own  
And other princes cast out of their thrones,  
Have so acquainted me how misery  
Is destitute of friends or of relief.’

JOHN FORD.

THE Paris convent of St Joseph in the Rue Saint-Dominique was a peaceful backwater, the haunt of great ladies, *les philosophes*, like Montesquieu and Condillac, thinkers and writers. The great ladies, some of them famed for their wit and beauty of character more than for their rank or lovely faces, included Madame du Deffand; Madame de Vassé, playfully nicknamed La Grandemain by Prince Charles Edward; her friend and Condillac’s, that sweet ghost Mademoiselle Luci Ferrand de Marres. Around these last two there hangs a tale—a tale of a wandering Prince, fugitive, proscribed, a price upon his head, his pockets in varying degrees of emptiness, his sole assets his sword and his charm. For years after the earth had closed over Mademoiselle Luci, the secret of how she sheltered that nestless bird, Charles Edward Stuart, was darkly concealed.

The Prince, with Goring, rode out of Avignon, and from henceforward eluded the curious gaze of Europe during many months. The King at Rome, the French ministers, British envoys and

diplomatists, sought to track him vainly. Rumour reported him in innumerable haunts. He had been seen in Poland, in Berlin, at Venice, Strasbourg, Stockholm. There are dark places in that tale of later wanderings. As before, a woman—two women—played a notable part in them, but Mademoiselle Luci was more as Flora MacDonald to the Prince than was Clementina Walkinshaw. Clementina's brief day was to come afterwards.

Mademoiselle Luci, the friend and companion of Madame de Vassé, sat by the window overlooking the convent garden on a warm June morning. She was knitting her fine brows over a letter. The hand and the writer were equally unknown to her. A little smile parted her grave lips as she read. Her strange correspondent stated that she would be surprised by his communication as he had not the good fortune to be acquainted with her. Mademoiselle was the author of a history of Cartouche, the famous robber. As a kind of Cartouche the writer hoped to invoke her sympathy. The matter was simple. Would Mademoiselle receive from Waters, the banker, any letters addressed to Mr John Douglas?

Mademoiselle would. Mademoiselle did. With dancing eyes she consulted her Madame de Vassé—'sisters,' the sweet pair styled themselves—and before long she had received Mr John Douglas in person. He arrived, much wrapped up, despite June heat, and under cover of night. He came from Lorraine, where Madame de Talmond had property. She had recommended Mademoiselle

to him as a person of discretion. All was charmingly simple—until you reckoned with the women themselves.

In the plain room in which the youthful Madame de Vassé and Mademoiselle Luci received their friends, Monsieur Douglas threw off his disguise. The ladies saw a face, proud and handsome yet, but alas! beginning to show unmistakable signs of dissipation and deterioration. Madame de Talmond's violent influence had not been of the best. From her and the other Frenchwomen who 'pulled caps' for him, the Prince had learned to have a lower opinion of womenkind in general. His mouth had taken a bitter curve. All they wanted, these French fashionables, was a sensation, to be of importance to a young man who had made himself the observed of all Paris and the peril of politicians. Madame de Guéménée had almost carried him off by force. They had parted furiously after a scene worthy a French farce in its absurdity and vulgarity. Madame de Talmond was insanely jealous. He could not look at another woman without provoking her hysterical reproaches and demands. His face was hard as he gazed at these two—Madame de Vassé, plainly attired in the garb of her widowhood; Mademoiselle Luci, grey-clad, grave-eyed, a girl in years, a woman in wisdom, wit, and sympathy, healing, peaceful as a herb-garden under the afternoon sun after the extravagances and emotions of the empty-headed women who had lately courted and provoked him. His weary eyes dimmed suddenly.

Madame de Vassé curtsied. It was less a salutation to royalty than the formal greeting

which she might have given to any habitué of her rooms. Her look was kindly. 'It is His Royal Highness, as you said, Luci,' she remarked calmly to her friend. 'Will Monseigneur be seated?'

The Prince covered his face and burst abruptly into tears.

The past had risen cruelly before him. He saw a room in a poor inn, peat-smoke eddying about it, and a figure in wet riding-garb standing by the fire. Since they parted at Portree no woman had reminded him of Flora MacDonald. Now, in Luci Ferrand's quiet eyes, hazel, like Flora's, he saw again the island girl who had extended her pity in a matchless service to her Prince. It was not because she served his House, or believed in his Cause, but from pure humanity towards a hunted thing. These women had the same motive. He could read in their pure faces that they were sorry for him. Hence his tears, healing, for they fell without bitterness.

Later, he sat between them, his bright head bent, as he spoke of the past four months. He touched lightly upon desperate concealments, strange disguises, unlooked-for adventures, perils, hazards, escapes. 'What can a bird do that has no nest?' His voice shook violently. 'It can only flit from bough to bough.' He flung out his arms. 'I went to Venice, fearing I might be chased from thence. My fears were too well-grounded. The Senate sent me orders to leave at once. *Hé, mon Dieu!* I appealed to the Kaiser and the Queen of Hungary, asking if an anonymous, exiled Prince could be received by them, if he remained incognito. They were



adamant. I was refused. I risk my very life in coming to Paris——’

‘And break your word of honour, sir, passed to His Most Christian Majesty, that you would leave the realm,’ put in Madame de Vassé calmly. Charles’s flush deepened.

‘What other could I do, madame? I must arrange some system by which I can correspond with my friends and at the same time conceal my own movements.’ He stood up haughtily. ‘I ask your pardon. I have intruded, trespassed upon kindness which I am in no position to command——’ The delicate nostrils quivered. He was a flame, vehement, eager, blown upon by winds from every quarter, yet burning bright and defiant. He stumbled towards the door.

‘No. Stay, sir,’ besought Mademoiselle Luci. She laid her hand upon her friend’s arm. They consulted softly the while the Prince, resuming his seat, stared vacantly about him.

The upshot of it was the amazing arrangement that he should remain. The bird had found a temporary nest at least, but strange in the extreme. He was to be concealed in an alcove of Madame de Vassé’s apartments. To a creature accustomed to the open air, dependent upon exercise and sport for retaining his physical and mental health, the idea was grotesque and unsuitable in the extreme. He must be cooped up, day after day, in this confined space. At night he might make his way down a little stair, crooked and secret, to the rooms occupied by Madame de Talmond. The queer scheme, framed in secrecy, founded upon concealment, answered admirably until the arrival of the fierce

Polish beauty from Lorraine. She had brought Charles and Mademoiselle Luci together, only to proceed to be savagely and unjustly jealous of the younger woman. There was never a breath of scandal with it all. Mademoiselle looked after the wayward Prince as a sister might. She conveyed letters and parcels to him, mended his linen, did his meagre housekeeping, lent or recommended the books which empty, idle hours drove him to as drug and solace. Many times he heard, unseen, learned conversation and discussion between the famous thinkers of their day, gathered in Madame de Vassé's rooms. Other evenings he negotiated the dark, crooked stairs and appeared in the scented, over-furnished apartment of his Polish mistress. They quarrelled incessantly, both being passionate, empty-headed, and uncontrolled. Their furious mutual accusations, bitter retorts, violent recriminations, made sour and electric the quiet old house. Madame de Vassé and Mademoiselle Luci began to repent of their charity. These recurrent scenes between the Prince and Madame de Talmond had their danger. If Charles's presence in the convent leaked out his safety was seriously menaced, their reputations destroyed. Yet they had not the heart to tell him, each time he slipped away under cover of night, that he must not return. He was miserably poor, his affairs in disorder, his future unbroken by any gleam of hope. All Mademoiselle Luci's wise counsels were brushed aside. He was stubbornly bent on continuing this life of concealment and darkness. He had commissioned one Major Kennedy, a relative of Lochiel's, who was in the secret of its whereabouts, to send

over what he could of the Loch Arkaig treasure. After an arrest in London, Kennedy managed to make his way to the Continent, but arrived practically empty-handed. There were dark stories afloat as to the disposal of the gold. The clans had dipped their fingers in it, which was only the beginning of its sad shadow over the aftermath of the Rising. Cluny, Archibald Cameron, young Glengarry alike accused one another of meddling with and appropriating a share. The Cause, at one time the symbol of self-sacrifice, unselfishness, and high endeavour, was sinking slowly to the pitifulness and degradation of squalid quarrelling, sordid intrigue, treachery, bitterness, vilification. The exiles were beginning to despair. The Prince's conduct was so foolish, so childish, so incomprehensible. The Jacobite party in England sent over by Goring a sum of fifteen thousand pounds on condition that Charles parted with certain of his adherents and made his peace with France. Some of the money went to Avignon, where Stafford, Sheridan, Kelly, and others of the Prince's household existed uncertainly. The life of combined mental excitement and physical inaction spent by Charles affected his health. He could no longer boast, as he had been wont to do in his scanty letters to James or Edgar, that it was perfect. The futile scheming and preparations for another abortive plot alone roused him from his lethargy.

Once again the shadowy crown glimmered on the horizon. Charles was determined upon a bold venture. This time he pinned his faith and hopes

to succours in England. It was 1745 over again, the same lack of definite support, the same unpreparedness, the same delusion that his appearance in person would cause the English Jacobites across the water to rise for him. The horse-chestnuts were in full bloom, and Paris at its gayest. He lodged money, a vast sum for one in his hazardous pecuniary situation, at Waters's, and set about the purchase of arms. His chief correspondent and supporter was one Dormer, an English Jacobite, son of my Lord Dormer. Goring's brother, Sir Charles Goring, was commissioned to send a ship to Antwerp to bring the Prince from there to his 'rightful ain.' The usual secrecy and whispering attended the distribution of small silver medals bearing the proud profile, to stir up loyalty and enthusiasm. Charles wrote to Rome, asking that his commission as Prince Regent might be renewed.

The answer made the haughty cheek burn. James acceded to the request, but reminded Charles plainly that his own treatment of his wayward, secretive son must not be taken by the Prince as a precedent for the conduct of others. 'As to the new power of Regency you want, you must be sensible that you have acted towards me, for these five years past, in a manner which noways deserves so great a mark of trust and kindness; but far be it from me to act, especially towards you, by pique or resentments. It is true the treatment you give me is a continual heart-break to me; but it excites my compassion more than my anger, because I will always be persuaded that you are deluded. But let me recommend you not to use other people

as you do me, by expecting friendship and favours from them while you do all that is necessary to disgust them, for you must not expect that anybody else will make you the return I do.'

The letter, crumpled in angry despair, dropped from the Prince's hand. His bright head sank. The words, stern, practical, warning, had pierced the airy bubble of delusive hopes which constantly buoyed Charles up in forlorn expectation that some swift turn of fortune's wheel would lift him to his rightful place. He paced the floor with knitted brow and rapid, angry steps. If this mad scheme succeeded, if he won the throne, the detractors, the faint-hearted, the critical, like James and Henry, must acknowledge that his policy had been right. He stretched his long arms above his head in a gesture of unmeasured freedom. His glance resumed its old sparkle. At least for a short time he would escape from this life of inaction and seclusion, this petty succession of quarrels and reconciliations, growing more embittered and estranging every time, with Madame de Talmond. Even Mademoiselle Luci's gentle surveillance, her unobtrusive care, irked him. He had grown gradually to realise and resent Madame de Vassé's unspoken but tacit criticism of his existence of uselessness, lurking, and furtive shelter. He threw up his head. In a few weeks he would feel the sea-wind on his cheek, hear the roar of the gale filling the sails with fullness as his boat dipped and rose in green waters. He would be in the company of men, devoted, keen to hazard their lives and their all for his Cause. 'I have not yet tried the temper of England,' he mused. 'In 'Forty-five they were alarmed, unprepared.



Now, when I come among them, and they learn that twenty-six thousand muskets are waiting . . . ' His eyes shone.

It had rained all day and the air felt damp and melancholy. The lights of an obscure tavern in an obscure foreign town pierced the desolate, misty darkness and fell upon the small, agitated figure of Mr Patullo, late of Dundee. He had acted as muster-master in the Jacobite army during the Rising, and the remembrance of his hardships and escape, after weeks of lurking about the neighbourhood of his native town until he could find a ship sailing for France, still caused his teeth to chatter. He wavered between the inn door and the private room which he had engaged at the orders of a Mr Dutton. The endless cypher-names and cyphers that Charles and his adherents concealed themselves under and used in correspondence added to the cloud of mystification in which the Prince delighted to shroud his movements. Mr Patullo was as much in the dark as to these as everyone else.

He leaped apprehensively as he saw two figures, which had suddenly turned a corner, looming towards him. Both were tall men, cloaked, walking quickly. Mr Patullo had seen the taller before, and the recollection increased his tremors. He scuttled back into the inn, and was waiting, a mixture of deference, apprehensions, and quivering loyalty, when the two men were ushered in.

The taller threw off his cloak. Mr Patullo glanced at the door before he knelt. 'Your fire is very welcome.' Charles allowed his hand to be kissed, then strolled over to the blaze. 'Eh,

*mon ami*, you have grown thinner since I saw you.'

Mr Patullo managed a sickly smile. After the Rising and his own miraculous escape he was determined to burn his fingers in no more Jacobite pies, but the sight of the Prince, eager, beautiful, enthusiastic, weakened his resolve. 'Your Royal Highness commanded my attendance, sir. How can I serve you?' he asked simply.

Charles frowned. 'I want to know how affairs stand in your own and the neighbouring counties.' He spoke abruptly. 'What of Angus, Kincardine, Aberdeenshire?'

Patullo was glum. He glanced at Henry Goring—*alias* Dutton—tall and stiff by the door. 'If your Royal Highness contemplates another descent upon Scotland——' he murmured uncertainly.

'What if I do?' The Prince's breath came fast.

'Sir, it would be useless. With all respect to your Royal Highness, I venture to say this. My Lord Ogilvy, who brought the men of Angus to join the royal standard, is an exile. My Lord Pitsligo is in hiding, a proscribed fugitive. These were the chief names about my part of Scotland. The East Coast, mighty useful for the landing of ships and ammunition during the late insurrection, can—pardon me, sir—do no more.'

The little man had gained height and dignity. Charles, his chin dropped to his hand, one high-booted leg swinging gently in the firelight, frowned anew. When he spoke his voice was petulant and disappointed. 'I had designed to land arms there again,' he admitted.

Patullo thrust out a disapproving lip. 'Is that

wise, sir? The clans can have no stomach for another rising. In the Highlands, I hear, they are too occupied with their disputes and broils over the gold from Loch Arkaig to fight for your Royal Highness.'

Charles stood up abruptly. 'Enough, then. I will go. Mr Patullo, you served me faithfully before. I would add another item to the sum of my indebtedness, by commanding your silence as to my coming here.'

He yielded his hand to Mr Patullo's trembling lips and, beckoning curtly to Goring, swung out of the inn. He had thrown his cloak about him carelessly. Goring glanced in apprehension at the pale, haughty features, visible in the moonlight to any passer-by. 'Pray muffle your face, sir,' he murmured. 'If you were to be recognised——'

'My God! I could sometimes wish that I might be, if that would end it.' The Prince's voice was shrill with disappointment and chagrin. 'I had so reckoned upon Patullo and Angus aid, at least in landing the guns. Eh, 'tis a faint-hearted rat, and the Scots a faint-hearted people!'

Goring glanced at him in disgust. His loyalty was beginning to feel the incessant strain upon it. The Prince had scant pity for his followers. Goring went in dread of arrest, as he was forbidden by the French ministry to show himself within fifty leagues of Paris. The previous December he had been imperiously dispatched there by Charles to fetch His Royal Highness's muff. Uncomplainingly, he acted as the Prince's ambassador on various projects that took him to foreign courts. He was gradually impairing his

fine health in Charles's wearing service, and had long since parted with his small fortune.

The Prince, quick to detect Goring's disapproval, slipped a hand beneath his arm. 'Come, I will tell you of my plans.' His voice was softened, a wooing, wiling thing. 'You must go to England, *mon ami*, and see Dormer as to the properest means of procuring arms. Likewise, find out how I could be concealed in case I came to him, and the safest way of travelling to that country.'

The Prince's mouth was close to Goring's ear, his warm breath on Goring's cheek. They were pacing alongside of a canal, a slow mass of oily ripples in the cloudy moonlight. Shapes of a bridge, houses, and a rotting wharf peered out of the darkness. A cold wind blew in their faces, carrying small rain.

'Your Royal Highness will venture your person?' Goring was appalled.

The proud head lifted. 'I am willing to trust it upon occasion. If Dormer should decline, you must find out some proper person for that purpose, as I am determined to go over, at any rate. I assume that I shall expose nobody but myself, supposing the worst.'

Schemes for the mad venture went merrily on. Dormer, approached by Goring, proved willing and adaptable. Charles recklessly ordered guns and broadswords. June slipped into July, July into August, August into September. On an evening, warm and dark, the Prince, after a fierce scene with Madame de Talmond, whose loyalty he was beginning to doubt, slipped out of Paris

disguised as an abbé, with a black patch upon his eye, and blackened eyebrows. He reached Antwerp in four days. Here he lingered at a lodging procured by Goring, remaining private during the daytime, at night walking for hours in the flat, featureless country outside the town. His whole being throbbed for London. What madness—what wild plots and hazards sang and bubbled in a brain never too strong, but now rapidly deteriorating through alcohol and inaction? His own conviction was that his appearance in person in their capital must shame or inflame the English Jacobites into rising for him. Once he had secured their allegiance and support the Scots were certain to follow. He slipped on board a nameless vessel, and once more crossed the sea. In two days he had landed, a price upon his head, his fair face made familiar to thousands by its reckless reproduction in medals and marble. Charles took the risk lightly. ‘The grand affair of L.,’ as he called it, was ripe for fulfilment. Of all his plots it was the most futile, the least successful, for it never matured.

My Lady Primrose was a woman whom the Prince’s ambition had cost much. Ever since her son, Sir Archibald Primrose of Dunipace, had suffered for the Jacobite Cause at Carlisle in November 1746—leaving a wife, who followed him the next day, and eleven fatherless children—the widowed mother had lived in mourning robes and strict seclusion. This warm September evening she so far relaxed as to entertain a few friends of her own sex to a quiet tea-drinking. There was mild gossip, some speculations about



possible events, all topics being selected with nicety in order not to hurt the hostess's feelings or her political principles. In the midst of a discussion as to the length of time that certain fashions, pronounced by the Duchess of Kensington to be vastly immodest, would endure, the door opened to permit the announcement of a Mr Brown.

My lady rose. Her face, dressed in a courtesy smile, froze. Her half-extended hand wavered visibly. The new-comer, tall, fair, with a subtle air of distinction about him, a carriage of the head, unconsciously haughty, that would cause him to be remarked among thousands, bowed over the fluttering fingers. 'Enchanted, madame,' he murmured.

Lady Primrose rallied. She turned back to her other guests, sweeping the fresh recruit in the train of her ample black skirts. 'Permit me to present my friend Mr Brown, just arrived from Paris.' She recited numerous names. 'Pray, Mr Brown, be seated, and tell us of your passage. I vow it was stormy with our September gales.'

Mr Brown, whose eyes matched his name, proceeded to make himself vastly agreeable. The ladies voted him charming. They plied him with eager questions as to Paris fashions and Paris doings. His gay answers covered Lady Primrose's silence. She sat very still, her eyes upon the door, her hand involuntarily straying to her heart or to the miniature of Sir Archibald on her bosom. It rose and fell with her quick breathing, the sole sign of agitation which she betrayed. The young man lolling on the

brocaded sofa was talkative and easy in conversation, but when they went he left the inquiring ladies as wise about him as at the first curtsy of introduction. *Non, non, non*, he was never at the French court now, though he admitted to knowing Fontainebleau and Versailles. Momentarily a hard look tightened his mouth. Madame de Pompadour was the favourite as much as ever. She set the mode, and Paris followed. Had the ladies heard that this winter the patch was to be worn on the cheek, no longer beside the lips? Madame decreed it, anyway. There were little gasps and cries of protest, incredulity. Bright eyes peeped from behind fans of chicken-skin and pretty mouths put breathless inquiries. A few of the older women glanced at Lady Primrose. La! poor thing, French fashions could hold no lure for her, doomed to her mournful weeds for husband and son.

The last visitor had gone. Lady Primrose stumbled back into the room and fell upon her knees. 'Sir, this is madness,' she gasped.

Charles raised her. He was smiling. 'I do not think so, madam. If it is, my friends share it. I have hopes this time—great hopes.'

Lady Primrose shook her head. 'But to come so openly, barely disguised, 'tis to court disaster, sir.' She wrung her hands. 'When your Royal Highness walked in, I vow I was so startled I almost screamed.'

Charles took her hand and led her to a sofa. 'You were brave, madam. I would ask more of you than your silence—shelter here—but I do not know whether I have the right.' His gaze grew mournful. 'Were it not for my Cause,

your ladyship would still be a happy mother, and a gallant gentleman would watch his children growing up——'

'To serve their King!' She rose, her eyes kindling. 'Sir Archibald vowed with his last breath that he was to suffer for his religion, his Prince, and his country—for each of which he wished he had a thousand lives to spend.' Her look glowed. 'Can his mother say less? Your Royal Highness's commands——'

Charles bowed his head. The flame of loyalty was not blown out. He gathered courage from this mourning woman's selflessness, and for a little space hated his own unworthiness. For him, men like Archibald Primrose counted the world well lost, and death in brutal guise as the consecration of their service to their King's son. Unfortunately, the Prince had known so much loyalty that he had come to look on it as his right, and any particular personal instance failed to evoke a special gratitude. 'If you would hide me here, till I see how my affairs are to stand?' he asked.

'Of a certainty, sir. I am honoured. Few come, for I live very solitary.' She smiled faintly. 'To-night's tea-drinking was an unwonted dissipation for me.'

London was hot and airless. The Prince, plainly dressed, strolled about the sultry streets—unnoticed, unknown, unrecognised. It was his first visit to his capital, and very different had been his expectations of such an event. Five years ago it had seemed a certainty. He was leading a gathering army through Scotland.

Edinburgh fell before his approach. He had held his court at Holyrood for six restless weeks, and then come south. But for that check at Derby, how near, how triumphant his entry into London loomed. The old bitterness, the fierce resentment against those who had forced retreat upon him, rose in his stormy heart. He stared with hungry eyes at the palaces where he should be reigning. An acquaintance, one Colonel Brett, a taciturn man pitted with smallpox, accompanied him on his meaningless peregrinations. Together they wandered round the Tower. Charles examined a gate attentively. It might be blown up with a petard, he hazarded. He was silent and moody. The atmosphere was full of ghosts, the sad shades of those who had forfeited their lives on Tower Hill for his Cause. Balmerino, Kilmarnock, Lovat, grinned and gibbered before him, while behind them lurked a more mournful figure yet, the poor Duke of Athol, who had breathed his last, a prisoner, within those frowning walls. The Prince drew a hand across his brow, bringing it away wet. Then his face darkened as the recollection of his own miserable situation recurred to him. The headless dead at least were quiet in their blood-stained shrouds. He had yet to carry his burden of life, soured and embittered by the withholding of all that should be rightfully his. 'To live and not live is worse than death,' he mused sombrely.

The day had been stuffy and exhausting. For hours no breath of air came to stir the dead atmosphere until after sunset. Then rain commenced, straight, steady, undeviating, great sheets

of water that made the pavements shallow lakes, and raced with miniature roar and swiftness along the greasy gutters. It was not a night to tempt stragglers abroad. The dark, the wet, the rising wind which dashed heavy drops in the faces of passers-by kept the streets vacant and deserted. The very chair-men shrank from their allotted task.

Pall Mall was swept by the storm, but a certain stealthy activity might be discerned by anybody with sufficient curiosity to risk a wetting in order to watch. Men—cloaked, furtive figures—hastened with bent heads and hurried steps to an obscure door. They halted, knocked, murmured name or pass-word, and disappeared within. The rain fell remorselessly, and darkness shadowed the town. London was quiet, ignorant that plans to overthrow the dynasty were being discussed in a Pall Mall cellar.

Some fifty individuals had assembled in it, uneasy, reluctant, driven thither by the varying winds of curiosity, loyalty, eagerness. It was something to see this Prince who had marched with his wild Highlanders as far as Derby five years before, and put the capital itself into a state of panic. That was a brave attempt, but subsequent events merely showed the hollowness of the Stuart Cause and the folly and uselessness of espousing it. The room was quiet, only the thud of rain on the pavement outside, above the level of the carefully-shuttered window, shrouded so as to conceal the faintest glimmer of light which might serve to betray the persons and proceedings within, breaking the silence. The conspirators sat round a table, every man striving



to make himself as inconspicuous as possible. The majority were persons of wealth and position, but in rank the Duke of Beaufort, ruddy-faced, clear-voiced, and the Earl of Westmorland, handsome and talkative, were the most important.

The Prince came amongst them, slinging off his dripping mantle, to show a face wet with rain and alight with hope. He was still sanguine, but no longer upheld by the eager certainty of five years before. Though his blood was moving quickly from his swift walk, the room felt dank and chill to him as he entered it. The men who rose to pay their stiff, English homage were cautious, non-committal, unenthusiastic. He looked at them, and unaccountably his spirits sank. The old melancholy clouded his eyes.

He seated himself at the head of the table, a noble figure, a leader of lesser men. He talked, argued, protested, stooped at last to plead. He spoke eagerly, eloquently of his own patient preparations, the arms in readiness, the Scots who would be only too willing to rise if England but gave the lead. He was very plausible, very pathetic, but his advocacy met with shaken heads and no encouragement. What he planned and proposed—a general rising—was madness. It meant Newgate for themselves, Tower Hill for him. He retorted passionately that he did not care. If four thousand men could be got together, he was ready to head another rebellion.

They refused definitely. The time was not ripe for such. He flushed with passion, calling them cowards. Some vague suggestion was made of a night attack on St James's. Charles's eyes flashed, then he shook his head. He would

be no party to any such scheme unless the personal safety of the Elector and his family were promised.

The dim lights, smoke-entangled, fell upon the slim figure, the working features and pleading eyes. They showed up the hard faces that watched him. It was madness. The room echoed to their unison. All were agreed. The Prince had risked his life, wasted his own and his adherents' money to no purpose, gained nothing by this rash and secret raid on England. He read his doom in their stern looks. There was less to be hoped from them than in 1745. The mockery of the motto which he himself had chosen for the seals with his effigy, 'Look, love, and follow,' rose in his breast with overwhelming bitterness. They had looked, they might love, but they cared too deeply for head and property to rise and follow.

The Prince lingered in London for seven days. As a last resort towards rousing his lethargic adherents he took a strange, desperate step. In a dim city church he forswore the faith which had driven his grandfather into unending exile, and been the stay and solace of his father through many sorrows. The Prince's own religion was 'yet to seek,' as Lord Elcho's shrewd eyes had noted five years earlier. He had not found it, and his temporary embracing of the Protestant faith brought him neither political advantage nor peace of mind.

He was still young enough, hopeful enough to court hazard and adventure with a gay mind. The risks and uncertainties of his recent journey-

ings, a week in London, with its mingled homage and excitements, although culminating in fresh disappointment, ill fitted him for the 'triste solitude,' as he called his refuge in the convent of St Joseph. He left London on September 22nd and was in Paris again two days afterwards. The old life of hiding, theatrical disguises, mystification, cyphers, and concealments engulfed him afresh.

Madame de Talmond was in her perfumed, elaborately-furnished cabinet when Charles walked in. She gave a start, followed by a little cry, for her thoughts were far from him. If they played round him in any guise, they pictured him in London. Her mouth thinned at the sight of him, travel-stained, his hair unpowdered and carelessly dressed, his face still flushed with the winds of his voyaging. She frowned slightly. This game of hide-and-seek, their repeated scenes, their soured love-making, commencing in kisses and ending in quarrels, were fast wearying her. She had gained nothing from her association with Charles. When he was a novelty, a fashionable spectacle, she had enjoyed snatching him from other women, defying the King and her husband on his account. In a sense she loved him, but ambition played a large part in their relations. If Charles won his throne, who knew to what high place he might not lift her? She had encouraged him in his defiance of France, not altogether foreseeing to what it would lead. Now, she realised, she had lost her position at court, become the prey of scandalous and prying tongues, borne, in a measure, with Charles's exigencies, tempers, and

obstinacy, to no purpose. He was beginning to bore her by his repeated failures, abortive plots, his suspicions and caprices. Her face was cold, her manner devoid of welcome as he stood there.

‘So you are returned, *mon ami*?’ She yawned. ‘Well?’

‘It is not well.’ The fine, arched brows met. ‘I have failed again.’ He made the admission bitterly, reluctantly.

Her shoulders, rising bare and cool out of costly lace, lifted contemptuously. ‘As usual,’ she rejoined dryly.

He took a step nearer. ‘What do you mean?’

‘How you scowl, Carluccio!’ She oscillated her fan to and fro, marking his quickened breath and angry eyes. ‘Do you not always fail?’ she asked cruelly. ‘Your plots! Bah! Things of whispering and planning and cypher letters, but they dissolve into mist when you put the men behind them to the test.’

He sat down, staring at her. ‘Is that my fault? I am ready to lead an army, head another rising, but not of recreants and poltroons.’ He spoke rapidly. ‘It is a new thing to have you taunt me with failure. Did you not encourage me to defy Louis, to disappear, to seek you here?’

She flashed out: ‘Because a woman was a fool once, is she to suffer for it continually?’

A dead quiet dropped upon the room. Charles spoke first. He was calm and unmoved, save for a quiver of fine nostrils and a small trembling of his upper lip. ‘Do you wish me to go? Last spring I gave you my formal promise in writing to retire from your apartments at any hour of the day or night when you so commanded.’ He

halted, then continued, 'If you want to protect me, you must not make my life more wretched than it is.'

Her eyes flashed dangerously. She had an insanely jealous nature, and the thought of those two quiet women upstairs was seldom out of her mind. She placed the worst, the coarsest construction upon his relations with Mademoiselle Luci. The great lady disappeared momentarily. She was the Tartar, the savage, akin to the fish-wife and the street-walker in her furious malice and hatred of another woman. She did not want Charles herself, but she was enraged at the thought of Mademoiselle Luci consoling and possessing him.

She stood up. She screamed at him: 'You can stay, as you please. I go—to Lorraine. Once I am gone from here, you and that girl upstairs can enjoy each other. I believe that she has been your mistress for months!'

She said no more. Charles's temper was not one to bear insult and untrue accusations calmly. He struck her, his long fingers coming hard against her scented, powdered cheek. Under her rouge she grew livid. She half-leaned upon, half-cowered beside, a rosewood cabinet. She remembered stories of his violent passions. Had not Madame de Guéménée been thankful to escape with her life?

Charles stood rigid. It was the first time in his thirty years that he had struck a woman. An ill hour dawned for him when he learned to lift up his hand against Madame de Talmond. They had had many ugly scenes, but none so ugly as this one. It had become the end of very



much : faithfulness, compassion, companionship, light love, and a shared admiration. In their places distrust, hatred, naked passion, and brute force reared their hideous heads.

She said nothing. The Prince turned and groped his way towards the secret stair. The action shook off her fear and stupor. She screamed after him, vile things, threats to expose him, abuse of Mademoiselle Luci and himself, regrets that she had ever confused her life with his. His last picture of her was a painted, overdressed hag, the livid mark of his blow showing on a face haggard and middle-aged beneath rouge and enamel.

She vanished—to Lorraine, as she had said. When she did not return, Charles's suspicions of her fidelity mounted. He announced his intention of following her. At Lunéville, near the court of Duke Stanislas Leszczyński, who was his cousin, and father to the French queen, he had lurked before, and Madame de Talmond had not been far off. He was beginning to fear her, but he wrote to her a passionate, pitiful letter in execrably spelled French. There was no reply, nor did the affronted lady reappear. Not long afterwards his shelter in the convent was closed to him. Madame de Vassé, regretful but immovable, told him that he had better leave. His queer, quasi-romantic friendships with the women who had befriended him still continued, but the excitable lady downstairs, and a Prince who was under promise not to set foot on French territory, were too dangerous and combustible elements beneath the same roof. So declared Madame de Vassé ; so, reluctantly,

concurrent Mademoiselle Luci. A peace—tattered, frail, destined to be repeatedly broken—had been arrived at between Charles and Madame de Talmond, but it was only the prelude to the old story. Scenes, quarrels, recriminations, commenced afresh, and that hasty blow was, alas! but the first of many. Madame de Vassé was adamant, the Prince offended, Madame de Talmond and Mademoiselle Luci suspicious and resentful of each other. The bird must desert the poor nest that had availed him for a little time in which to rest his hunted body. Proud, embittered, he went, disappearing for three months into a darkness so artful and impenetrable that historians and lovers have failed alike to probe it. It was his fate to be on the wing continually, to flit from bough to bough, unfriended, unwelcome, unwanted, companioned by poverty and his broken dreams.

## CHAPTER V.

‘“The purpose you undertake is dangerous ; the friends you have named uncertain ; the time itself unsorted, and your whole plot too light for the counterpoise of so great an opposition.”

‘Say you so, say you so ? . . . By the Lord, our plot was a good plot as ever was laid ; our friends true and constant : a good plot, good friends, and full of expectation ; an excellent plot, very good friends. What a frosty-spirited rogue is this ! . . . Hang him ! let him tell the king ; we are prepared. I will set forward to-night.’—SHAKESPEARE.

THE years drifted on, years for Charles of solitude, concealments, false disguises, enlivened only with the poor entertainment of plaguing and mystifying the politicians of France and England by his elusive movements. He tried vainly (sending the patient Goring as his ambassador to their courts) to obtain aid from Prussia and Sweden. He was reported as being in Silesia and Spain. Goring alone was told of his places of concealment. Once he dared discovery by attending a masked ball at the Paris opera-house. Mademoiselle Luci, gentle, serene, slipping imperceptibly towards the early grave which alone saved her from sharing the fate of all whom he eventually distrusted and discarded, was still his correspondent and counsellor. To the dreary necessity of always moving from place to place was now added the incessant galling of want of money. Charles had scant pity or thought for other exiles, their meagre existences

of petty economy, hope deferred, the ceaseless ache of homesickness, the longing for the sight of heather and tall hills. If he remembered them, it was with a frown and the bitter reflection that their fates could not be so hard as his. He had practically broken with his father. James was later to confide in Sir John Graeme that he was an entire stranger to the Prince's affairs, and would not even know whether he were alive if he did not hear distantly rumours of his health from others in Charles's confidence. In 1753 Charles had not written to Rome for two years.

The news of his turning Protestant, instead of making the sensation which he had expected, merely caused James and Henry to fall ill with shock and chagrin. Charles had always been reckless about money. Waters refused to advance sums that did not exist. Dormer, his agent in Antwerp and his chief channel of communication with England, complained of the Prince's extravagance and excesses. The French servants at Avignon were dismissed. Stafford and Sheridan found themselves obliged to walk, as Charles sent orders for his coach to be sold. He borrowed money from Lady Primrose and Lady Montagu, another Jacobite enthusiast and supporter. Madame de Vassé, more sensible and less sensitive, declined to supply him any more. The year 1752, only six after Culloden, found him soured, needy, discredited with all those whose good opinion was of any weight or value, but ready to make another desperate bid for that elusive throne.

There was a dark woman, by name Clementina Walkinshaw, who in the bleak January of 1746

tangled her webs about the Prince. He was younger then, little more than a lad, and bitter against those who had command of his affairs. He and she—'tis an old, sorrowful tale, glossed over by most who write the history of such times and such things. Together they sinned their sin, and then went their separate ways. He passed to defeat and hiding, and an inglorious tussle with a king's ministers in smiling France. She returned to her obscurity, hidden behind the ample skirts of innumerable sisters. For six years darkness shelters her. Then she emerges, a *chanoinesse* in a *chapitre noble* in the Netherlands, provided for respectably, so think her family, unrecking of that faithful, passionate heart which beat beneath the robe of a religious.

It beat only for her Prince. She turned her eyes from lesser lovers, though they came with honourable marriage behind their ardours. Tradition whispers that one would fain have made her his duchess. Further back there was a story of my Lord Elcho's wooing. They met again long years afterwards, an old, soured man and woman, for each had drunk bitter waters. What ghost of passion, what heat of memory, what regrets and dreary might-have-beens were present at that strange reunion!

The plain parlour of the courtesy-styled convent (its inmates took no binding vows of celibacy) was close in the May sunshine. Its narrow windows looked out on a high-walled garden, green and prim. Colonel O'Sullivan, stouter than of old, with the same jovial manner and big mouth, looked round him appraisingly as he waited. Faith, it appeared precious dull. If the



Walkinshaw miss were what he remembered her, if the owner of those flashing black eyes which spelled poetry and passion would fulfil her bygone promise, she must be mighty glad to exchange this solitude and repression for the society of one whom she had once sworn to follow, should he fail or succeed. It would not be William John O'Sullivan's fault if he did not persuade her.

He wondered a little at Charles's taste, as she came in. He stood up, bowing deeply to her curtsy. She was still sallow, still high-browed, only her eyes saving her from plainness, insignificance. They held a fire which made his pulse beat quicker. For his Prince he must be eloquent, convincing, persuasive, but if her own heart were his advocate, he should have an easier task. 'I mentioned no name when I asked you to receive me, madam.' He kissed her hand. 'I dared not think myself so fortunate as to hold a place in your recollection——'

She broke in eagerly. 'Why, I remember perfectly, sir. It is Colonel O'Sullivan. You were in the Prince's service. We met at my uncle's house of Bannockburn six years ago.'

He stated his errand bluntly. 'It is from the Prince I come, madam.'

She clasped her hands. He wondered how he could have thought her plain a moment ago. Her face was flushed, working; her eyes, their hard brightness dimmed by tears, more beautiful with their fires softened. 'Ah, my Prince, my Prince.' She murmured the words half to herself.

'I am honoured by your recollection, madam. Then you have not forgotten my master either?' He smiled.

She cried out, her hands pressed to her breast, as if to still its tumult: 'Forgotten! Never for a moment, day or night, waking or sleeping. In sleep he came to me in dreams; awake, his image walked by my side. Other men'—a hint of coquetry, of woman's triumph, peeped out—'have wooed me, but they were shadows, naught to me.' Her voice rose. 'I vowed to follow my Prince whithersoever Providence might lead him, should he fail in his attempt. Ay, had he succeeded, and needed me . . . ' She halted, rapt, quivering, speaking out of a full heart. 'Forgotten? Never, never!' cried Clementina Walkinshaw.

O'Sullivan gazed at her with kindling eyes. 'Madam, you make my errand a simple one. I have the honour to be in the Prince's confidence. He is alone, poor, unsuccessful, his enemies striving always to track him down.' She followed his words with breathless tension. 'In the dreadful state of his affairs, what could better soothe his regrets than the presence of the lady whom he most loves?'

'Ah!' she said. 'Ah!' The rapt look fled from her face. 'Does he still love me?'

'I would wager he does, madam,' lied Colonel O'Sullivan.

She dropped into a chair, her look brooding. 'I am thinking, wondering. Where is the Prince, sir?'

O'Sullivan lowered his voice. 'I put His Royal Highness's very life into your hands, madam, by telling you of his whereabouts. He resides principally in Ghent, where he passes under the name of Johnson.'

She nodded gravely. 'And he is poor, lonely, you say?'

'He is both, madam. He refuses to accept a pension from France or aid from Rome. All he has to depend on are the sums collected among the faithful in England, and smuggled over the water to him.'

Clementina said bitterly, irrelevantly: 'When he went, he did not wait to bid me farewell.'

The room was very still. A few pigeons stepped and sidled about the grass outside the windows. Their monotonous groo-groo, groo-groo was the only sound.

O'Sullivan's voice shattered the brooding quiet. 'The Prince, madam, was a soldier, heading his army. He had to leave Stirling at short notice. Was he to linger, enjoying a woman's kisses, while the hounds of Cumberland pressed on his heels?' O'Sullivan had conveniently forgotten his own share in that night's doings.

She was a woman, therefore with a woman's obstinacy and regrets. 'I would not have detained him; but to leave me without a word, a good-bye. When I came from my room that morning to be told casually that the Prince and his army had left before dawn, something died here.' She pressed a hand to her heart. 'I was very quiet. None knew. I went back to my people in Glasgow after the country was safe for travelling, but they grew wearied that I listened to no suitor, and lastly my uncle, General Graeme, arranged matters for my reception here. I thought I had found peace, but—but——'

O'Sullivan was stern from very fear of her failing Charles. 'There can be no peace for the

woman who breaks faith. If you saw him, madam, embittered, frustrated, solitary, debarred from marrying as his birth dictates. . . . It is no light thing that is asked of you. He cannot marry you, lest his affairs take a better turn, and then you would hamper his union with some princess. I do not come from him, demanding that you should join him. I take the risk of imploring you to do this'—he knelt clumsily—'and give him such comfort and companionship as a woman can. There are men with him, but what solace may their society be?'

She was broken, weeping. 'If he wants me, I will go to him. You must be my friend, sir, and help me. How can I travel unescorted? How far is Ghent?'

O'Sullivan, so soon as he had gained his object—Clementina's consent—was anxious to evade further responsibility. The Prince was now so irritable and capricious that he would be quite capable of slamming his door in the face of a woman who arrived unheralded, unasked, accompanied by William John O'Sullivan. 'If he wants her, let him arrange to fetch her. It is a business of women's company and countenance, with a man's escort and protection. Goring will undertake it, if the Prince so orders,' mused the Irishman.

He bade her wait. She nodded, acquiescing gravely. She had already waited for six years, which had schooled her to patience. A few weeks' delay and disappointment could surely be endured. He carried away the picture of her, tall, dark-robed, outwardly unmoved, a fire within. Only her eyes betrayed her. 'He used to toast the Black Eye in his skulking,' soliloquised

O'Sullivan. He spurred his horse into a jolting canter. 'When he has it, he may be more content. As for her—God help her!'

If she—Clementina Walkinshaw—craved to immolate herself, to carry out her six years' old vow, the moment served her. Charles had learned to depend upon feminine society, and now found himself practically cut off from it. He missed Mademoiselle Luci, Madame de Vassé, his excitable Egeria, Madame de Talmond. If he could not have a wife suitable to his station, he must have a mistress. His face flamed as he recalled the letter which James had written him for his thirtieth birthday. He counselled Charles to marry. 'Had you entered into the view I formerly gave you, you had been probably at this time the father of a family, with a wife whom it would not have been beneath you to have married had you been in England. . . . I am so much convinced of this necessity of your marrying, that I could almost say that I would rather see you married to a private gentlewoman than that you should not be it at all . . . and therefore I cannot but recommend earnestly to you to think seriously on the matter, and, as you cannot now hope to make a marriage suitable to yourself, to endeavour to make one that may be at least as little unequal as possible; for I can only, on this occasion, exhort you in general, since I cannot think of any particular person to propose to you who might be in any ways proper and at the same time willing to marry you. I shall add nothing further at present to my ardent wishes that all that is great and good may attend you,



and that those in whom you confide may love you half as well as I do.'

James's sternness and strictures generally melted into tenderness and blessing at the end of every letter, but Charles was unmoved by either. Willing to marry him! A private gentlewoman! Charles, who had by turns aspired to the Czarina, a daughter of France, a princess of Hesse Darmstadt, the sister of Frederick the Great. He raged dumbly. The suggestion, the implication, rankled for weeks. How much he desired to thwart James, to defy Madame de Talmond, to disappoint Madame de Vassé and Mademoiselle Luci, cannot be fathomed. A chance mention from O'Sullivan of Miss Walkinshaw's name recalled her image, faded, nebulous, to Charles's memory. His pulses quickened as he learned that she was actually on the Continent, and not far from him. O'Sullivan's visit to her, if not definitely sanctioned and suggested by Charles, at least had his tacit knowledge and approval. The next move in the game—two puppets against blind fate—was the arrival of the lady at Douay. The Prince heard of this, and wrote imperiously to her to join him in Paris.

A thousand and one difficulties presented themselves. Love might laugh at locksmiths and other obstacles. Clementina was taking a great leap in the dark, but this did not prevent her requiring female chaperonage, suitable escort, on her journey to her lover. Charles, so long accustomed to make use of people who were only too ready to carry out his wishes, calmly selected Madame de Vassé for his purpose. She was in

the country, with the distracted and loyal Goring under her protection. To Charles's cool request—that she should bring Miss Walkinshaw to him—Madame de Vassé returned a cold and dignified refusal. She would have nothing to do with the affair or the lady. Charles wrote again, petulantly, upbraiding her for her contumacy in the matter. Goring, to whom the errand was equally distasteful, declined it emphatically. Charles threatened and commanded. The tangle was further complicated by the Prince's suspicions and dismissal of a French agent, one Beson, whom he now meditated parting with solely on account of his nationality. His old ally, Lady Primrose, to whom 'the little man,' as she called Beson, acted as messenger and intermediary between herself and the Prince, was distracted and perplexed by his non-arrival on a promised date. The Jacobites feared his betrayal of the party's secrets out of revenge. Charles was fast alienating and estranging all honest supporters, and turning for solace and companionship to the wild schemes and society of hot-headed conspirators like Alexander Murray of Elibank, and women like Clementina Walkinshaw.

They faced one another, the Prince flushed, stubborn, ill-tempered, Goring worn and sad, but resolved to speak his mind. How much political inexpediency, the disapproval of the English Jacobite party, the folly of the wandering Prince burdening himself with a house and a woman, or sheer pity for the woman herself lay beneath Goring's obstinacy and arguments, can hardly be judged. His own harsh and inconsiderate treatment from the Prince's hands had made him

sorrowfully certain that Miss Walkinshaw might not fare much better, but there were stronger reasons why her further, more intimate connection with the Prince was dangerous, inadvisable. Her sister was in the household of the widowed Princess of Wales, an honoured, trusted servant of the Usurper's family. What secrets might not the two exchange, what confidences might not be broken and betrayed, what details intimately concerning Charles, menacing equally his personal safety, his prospects, his adherents' necks, would this woman not worm out of him and pass on, through the medium of her sister, to interested and active channels? Goring said as much at the conclusion of a heated interview. 'If any accident should happen to you, sir, by the young lady's means, I shall be detested, and become the horror of mankind. If your Royal Highness is determined to have her, let Mr O'Sullivan bring her to you himself.'

Charles's breath came fast. 'You refuse to carry out my commands?'

Goring bowed his head. 'Believe me, sir, such commissions are for the worst of men, and such you will find enough for money, but they will likewise betray you for more. Virtue deserves reward, and you treat it ill.' His voice broke as he added: 'I can only lament this unfortunate affair, which, if possible to prevent, I would give my life with pleasure.'

The Prince flung out in a white-heat of passion: 'I do not care to have one in my family that pretends to give me laws in everything I do.'

Goring was very pale. 'Am I to take my dismissal, sir?'

His quiet only lashed the Prince to greater anger. 'You know how you already threatened to quit me, if I did not do your will and pleasure.' He gave Goring a frigid, reluctant hand to kiss. 'What is past I shall forget, provided you continue to do your duty, so that there is nothing to be altered as to what was settled.'

He turned away, signifying that Goring's audience was at an end. The equerry rose from his knees, and stood straight and dignified. 'I assure you, sir'—his voice was very calm—'that all honest men will act as I have done, and should you propose to all who will enter into your service to do such work, they will rather lose their service than consent.' Suddenly he flamed into just anger. 'Do you believe, sir, that the Earl Marischal, Mr Murray of Elibank, George Kelly, and others would consent to do this? Why should you think me less virtuous? My family is as ancient, my honour as entire.' He ended brokenly, 'I am sorry from my heart you do not taste these reasons, and must submit to my bad fortune.'

The Prince made no reply. Goring had dared to cross his will, and he had no sympathy for such.

The dusk of a summer evening lay over the roofs of Paris, its grey and purple veil kind to the squalor and filth abounding in the narrow streets. Down one of the unfashionable quarters, sombre, respectable, stood an inconspicuous inn. In one of its upstairs rooms a woman was waiting, too restless and excited to sit for long, though she had travelled some leagues that day. Her face, always pale, was more so with the

heat and some inward emotion and strain. At every footstep she started. A passing vehicle drew her to the window on swift feet. The least sound in the house flushed her cheeks and brightened her eyes. They were very black eyes, seeming enormous in the pallor of their setting. She wore a dark, plain dress, and had cast off a heavy mantle on arrival.

He came so quietly that he was inside the room, smiling at her, before she turned from her post at the window and saw him. Her whole face flashed and quivered into beauty. He stood there, frowningly striving to recall her features. It was a strange woman who waited for him. How unreal seemed now the fevered weeks spent under the same roof, their secret meetings, hurried embraces, his furtive, stealthy visits to her chamber, kisses, reproaches, that passionate promise of fidelity. Here was the fulfilment, in a poor room, a mean inn, a hostile city. He wondered if in truth he had ever driven through Paris, the cynosure of all eyes, the favourite of the hour. Equally remote and visionary were the days in Scotland, triumph, hard marching, two victories, six weeks of holding a shadowy court, with God knew what intrigues and cross-currents beneath the outward splendour. For a moment he hated her, standing there, she, who had seen him in power and prosperity. He had thought to seat himself upon a throne, and the crown was further from his clutch than ever. He cried out, 'You have come, then? Do you understand to what and whom?'

She spoke for the first time. 'To my King. Oh, my dear, my very dear!'



Her arms were round him, he did not well know how. Their faces touched. He laid his upon her breast, a gesture of weariness, hopelessness, soul-sickness. She cradled his head in her arms, her heart, athrob with love and pity for him, hot against those who had befooled and cheated him.

My Lord Elcho had hard things to say of the Elibank imbroglio. 'A stupid plot,' he summed it up scornfully. He learned its sordid details of futile arrangement, its shoddy failure, from his brother Mr Charteris, who had a finger in the pie. So also and likewise had Mr Alexander Murray, brother to my Lord Murray of Elibank, 'vastly vain and full of himself,' as young Edgar, nephew to King James's sensible and long-suffering secretary, once described him. Some said that my lord himself was implicated, and even saw no harm in a planning of deliberate assassination. Neither did the Earl Marischal, whose shrugged shoulders and lifted eyebrows gave consent, if not definite approval. The Earl Marischal knew Prince Charles and the men who plotted for him. The thing would never come to a head, so why let it disturb one's rest o' nights?

There was yet another, whose treacherous mouth betrayed all to the Government. The reader has already met Alastair MacDonald of Glengarry, elder brother to the young Æneas who fell shot in the street of Falkirk. Imprisonment, months of languishing in the Tower, then emerging, to find himself poverty-stricken, unfriended and unwanted by either party, turned a

Highland gentleman into a paid spy and informer. He had already soiled his hands over the Loch Arkaig treasure. Accusations of purloining a share and forging the King's name had been flung at him. In return he blackened Archibald Cameron's. An aggrieved quartette—Cameron, young Glengarry, Sir Hector MacLean, and Lochgarry—had taken their persons and their complaints to the King at Rome in the spring of two years back. James wisely refused to meddle or arbitrate in a matter which concerned Charles solely. After mutual accusations and recriminations the four went their several ways, Glengarry's leading to treachery and betrayal, Archibald Cameron's to the scaffold three years later. In the meantime the Prince is waiting, feverishly impatient for those who were to assist him in this new plot.

It was September, a month of yellowing leaves and fields turned to still gold. In an inconspicuous Flanders town the Prince waited, the light of hope, of certainty once more kindled in his haggard eyes. He had dispatched Murray of Elibank ('Faith, I am well served by men of the name') to summon Lochgarry and Archibald Cameron. Months of trafficking with foreign kings and courts, with learning to hate and distrust all things and people that were French, sent his thoughts hungrily towards Scotland. To see these two, to clasp their hands, brought back the land where he had known such great faith, such stark loyalty. He was alone, save for one attendant. Goring was going between France and England, and Murray active on the

same business. Charles paced the poor room, his long hands linked behind his back, his head high. This time he should not, must not fail.

They came in quietly, Lochgarry, who called up memories of tramping in the dark and wet, over soaked heather and rutted tracks, when any rash movement or false step might betray them; Cameron, black-browed, grave, short of stature, unlike his dead brother, the fair-haired, gentle Lochiel, save in steadfastness and sincerity. They knelt, the Prince, with wet eyes, yielding each a hand. 'Eh, but it is good to see you both,' he sighed.

At his request they drew their chairs to a deal table and spoke in lowered voices. The Prince outlined his scheme. 'I hope, gentlemen, that I have brought matters to such a bearing, particularly at the King of Prussia's court, whom I expect in a short time to have a strong alliance with——' He broke off, musing. Frederick had indeed received his overtures graciously, but there was as yet no definite promise of the hand of his sister. Never mind. When I have a throne to offer the lady, as I trust shortly, there will be no opposition, Charles reflected.

Lochgarry broke gently into his day-dreams. 'In that event, sir, your Royal Highness I hope requires our services?'

The Prince started. 'But I do not desire the Highlanders to rise in arms until General Keith has landed in the North of Scotland with some Swedish troops.'

Lochgarry leaned across the table with sparkling eyes. 'Then your Royal Highness has much support?'

Charles nodded emphatically. 'Some of the greatest weight in England, though formerly great opposers to my family, are engaged in this attempt. I expect to meet with very little opposition. Whom can you propose, *mes amis*, that I should set them about my affairs in Scotland?'

They laid names before him. He smiled approval. Robertson of Blairfetty, Robertson of Wood Sheal, Forbes of Skelleter. He mouthed the Highland designations with eager satisfaction. The Scots for his money!

They came a few evenings later, with Lochgarry and Cameron, swift to serve again a Prince whose recklessness had ruined them. The dim, low-ceilinged room seemed full of men, whose lean, hard faces, rough accents, and blunt loyalty proclaimed their native land. They talked with enthusiasm, tempered by caution. The Prince gave them money, gathered hardly, to meet the expenses of their travelling. They were to go to Scotland to have a meeting with several Highland gentlemen, and bring them into the scheme. Where? He knitted puzzled brows, turning to Lochgarry. 'Where, *mon cher*?'

'There is a market for black cattle at Crieff shortly, sir. If our friends were to assemble there, and conduct an earnest conversation with certain at the fair, would it not look as if the purchase of stirks and stots were under discussion?'

Crieff! The little word called up a landscape with air like wine, and great sheets of heather purple in the fading summer. The wide, empty fields, girdled by their grim dykes, would stretch

rough and tawny after the ingathering of harvest, late as compared with that of the sister-country. He could almost hear the flutter and chat of little birds amongst the stubble. He could see the droves of panting, snorting beasts, thrusting their way to the square where they were to be penned and bargained for. Tall men, talking in tongues unknown and uncouth, would shout at their rear. And in and out of the groups of lairds and tacksmen would go his friends, with a word here, a whisper there, kindling and passing on the fiery cross to light the beacon that should cause his purpose to burn bright. He cried approval.

Dr Cameron came forward with further suggestions. His brother, Cameron of Fassefern, and their kinsman, Cameron of Glennevis, might act as intermediaries between the southern Jacobites and Cluny MacPherson. Charles was gracious, even cordial. When the meeting broke up he looked affectionately at the group, calling them his council. He carried Lochgarry with him back to Ghent, but he had looked for the last time on Archibald Cameron's face.

Young Glengarry was bent for the same place, through instructions from Sir James Harrington. It was unfortunate that Charles, ever ready to mistrust or doubt the most loyal, never had a suspicion of the traitor hidden under Alastair Ruadh's plaid. He confided in him secrets of the gravest import, which found their way with the least possible delay to London. Glengarry was anticipating, with a sarcastic smile, the coming interview with Charles, as he rode through the



flat, canal-cut country to the rendezvous. The autumn evening was turning to a desolate, rainy darkness. The landscape stretched featureless and uninteresting. Few people were to be encountered. Poplars and willows, almost leafless, creaked mournfully against a rising wind. The gaunt arms of a windmill were outstretched, motionless, menacing. Glengarry shivered, and was glad to see the lights of a village a mile ahead. He swung down from his horse before a door, above which a battered sign hung and whined. The few house roofs were dark and straight against a pale sky.

A spy's conscience is ever unquiet. Glengarry leaped as a hand touched him lightly on the shoulder. He turned, mastering his surprise and alarm, to find himself looking into the face of Morison, the Prince's Scots valet. Morison, a prisoner after Culloden, owed his life to his inability to recognise a decapitated and decaying head as that of his idolised master. On his release he had come to France and re-entered Charles's household. The Prince was worshipped by his servants. He had a careless kindness for them, alternating with months of neglect and forgetfulness. Morison's wages were paid more or less irregularly, but he would have starved sooner than take service elsewhere.

His mouth approached Glengarry's ear. Would Mr MacDonald be pleased to stop for a little at the inn? As this chimed with his own inclinations, Glengarry acquiesced and entered. He was drinking some thin wine and toasting his chilled toes before a wood fire when the door opened. A tall figure came in, discreetly muffled,

but Glengarry told himself contemptuously that the Prince's walk, his air, the haughty tilt of the chin were unmistakable. He scrambled up and saluted His Royal Highness.

Charles was restless and excited. The spy could have found it in his remnant of a heart to pity him, but he was through with the Stuarts. How could two men, an old and a young, praying at Rome, and a homeless, discredited, shoddy adventurer revive the glories of their fading dynasty? Any doubt of the scheme failing had apparently not entered Charles's head. He sat across the hearth from the dark figure which followed and punctuated his eager talk with nods and brief comments, his certainty pathetic in its futility. 'I expect to be in London very soon myself,' he announced. His voice thrilled. 'I am determined to give the present Government no quiet until I succeed, or die in the attempt.' He sat with shining eyes, gazing into the rainbow bubble of false hopes. He had said the same in 1745. He would either conquer or perish. He had done neither. He was still alive, uncrowned, his tradition subtly battered and defaced, but eagerly believing in himself and his ultimate destiny. The wind cried round the inn, the fire sank to glowing embers, but he sat there, the candle-light upon a face that was gradually showing the marks of debauchery and dissipation, yet still fair, still a lure and a magnet to the poor hearts that worshipped him. Even these few weeks of plotting and planning, the need for action and movement, the heady wine of danger, enterprise, anticipation, had made him more what he was. The open air, the chase, the right to

go about in daylight among his fellow-men with his head up, were as necessary for the health of his splendid body as for the salvation of his soul. Fate had condemned him to a life of lurking and hiding, to the confinement of secret chambers under the auspices of a jealous woman who, he complained, would not let him leave the house. Even the stealing forth at nightfall, or wandering about France and Flanders in a false nose, an abbé's garb, or with blackened eyebrows and a face pitted to counterfeit small-pox, suited him better than his irksome concealment in the convent of St Joseph. He thought of it with loathing, little recking how near to death his girl-friend was drawing, with her quiet loyalty, her dignified refuting of Madame de Talmond's vulgar accusations and insinuations, her grave charm. Mademoiselle Luci was thrust aside, conveniently forgotten, once her services were done with, as befell so many of Charles's unselfish saviours. His whole mind was obsessed with this new, ripening plot.

'It is to be a mob-rising then, sir?' Glengarry's lip curled, unnoticed by the Prince. 'And the Elector is to be made prisoner, your Royal Highness proclaimed, the family at St James's seized——'

Charles broke in. 'No harm is to happen them. I have made that plain. I will countenance no bloodshed.'

'Assuredly not, sir. Was not your Royal Highness known for your clemency while in Scotland?' Glengarry purred. 'And the Scots, sir?'

'There is to be a simultaneous rising in the

Highlands, headed by Lochgarry and Dr Cameron.' Charles's breath was quick. 'Mr Murray of Elibank has commissions for you, *mon ami*, and full instructions how you are to act in Scotland.' He went on eagerly: 'There are certain officers in French service and four hundred Highlanders who, with Murray at their head, are to attack St James's and seize the Elector's person.'

Glengarry bowed. 'I understand, sir.'

'The Swedes are to embark at Gothenburg.' Charles swung one slim foot to and fro. 'We cannot fail of success. I have been in close correspondence with England for a year and a half past. All this scheme is laid and transacted by the Whigs. No Roman Catholic is concerned.' His face darkened. 'You will give me your word and honour that you will write nothing concerning me or my plans to Rome.'

Glengarry promised volubly, easily. Rome was not London (although he wrote everything to Secretary Edgar in a few months' time), and a bulky dispatch shortly found its way to Whitehall. The information contained in it was amply sufficient to destroy any success which the crazy scheme might have obtained. Glengarry himself was sent to England by Charles, to interview Lord Elibank, 'that very prating, impertinent Jacobite,' as Walpole called him, and professed immense surprise at learning from his lordship that everything was indefinitely postponed. His brother had in fact travelled to inform the Prince.

In the meantime, for Charles, the bubble of airy hopes and rainbow fancies had not yet broken.

There were plots and conspiracies, counter-plots and sly schemes to turn out the Usurper and reseat the Stuarts in St James's ever since a Stuart king, Papist and hated, stole from his kingdom under cover of night, into an unremitting exile which nothing ended but death. There had been Jacobite intrigues before Charles Edward was born, before his father mismanaged that sorry business of the 'Fifteen, before the 'Forty-five had its brief, disastrous glory. One of the Cause's most ardent supporters (and feather-brained of conspirators) was Madame de Mézières, once Eleanor Oglethorpe, sister to the great general of that name, and to Fanny Oglethorpe, as pretty, as empty-headed, and as Jacobite as herself. Madame was verging on seventy now, but at the mere whisper of a new plot she shed twenty years. 'That mad woman,' James, cold, cautious, disapproving, styled her. Charles jeered at her, calling the granting of an audience to her his form of making penance. Now he had sunk so low, fallen so far beneath his former self, that he was glad of her aid. Her brother, General Oglethorpe, possessed an unoccupied house in Surrey, not far from Godalming. It was easy of access from London, a good hiding-place, a suitable spot from whence a Prince might ride forth to his capital, once he had been proclaimed king and his enemies' necks were in the dust. The Elibank plot, maturing through the summer of 1752, was ripening for completion by the autumn. None suspected that the arrival of Madame de Mézières at the old, sad house late in September boded anything but a wish for change of scene. She came alone, save for servants, and remained



in her solitude until the end of October. A young man (young enough to be her son, no scandal here) then made an unostentatious appearance. He continued very private, his chief recreations being cards with Madame, and endless pacings up and down the grounds of the house, always after dark. It stood remote and high-walled, a melancholy place in the fading year. The gardens were nearly bare of flowers, but profuse of weeds; the paths damp and moss-grown; the trees shedding their last burden of leaves. The grey skies hung heavy with cloud. Day after day rain fell, persistent, monotonous, depressing. Madame's shrewd black eyes noted the empty brandy-bottle, her guest's unsteady hand. *Ma foi!* if Charles deteriorated at this rate, the English might as well stick to their fat Elector. She felt the burden of her years as she strove by cheerful lying to steady the Prince's uneven spirits. Should this plot go the way of all the rest, then God pity him.

There was a black, wicked frost the first days of November. It remorselessly nipped the few surviving flowers. The country round lay dim and sad, immense stretches of down, with only chalk-pits and leafless trees, sodden and solitary, to break their monotony. On the momentous date—the 10th—the Prince was early astir, too restless to eat, too highly-strung and excitable to sit still, his heart in his eyes, perpetually turned towards the white highway outside the gates. How soon could news reach him? They were some thirty-two miles from London. The blow was timed for noon. A man on a swift horse should be able to gain the house by two o'clock. Madame laughed shrilly at his surmises. 'Eh, sir, you

want to kill the poor beast, and have the rider drop dead at your Royal Highness's feet likewise?'

Charles ground his teeth. 'Do I care what befalls, once I have the news I crave for?'

She was a brave woman, but his vehemence, his anxiety, masked under certainty, alarmed her. If tidings came of failure, of discovery, of betrayal! His foes, should they learn of his presence, would find him alone with a frail old lady. Then—then—— She shut her eyes before the thought of Tower Hill. For the first time a realisation of how much she had undertaken in countenancing this wild plot by having the Prince in her house, under her roof, assailed her. She felt suddenly old, solitary, too old, at any rate, for such a grave responsibility. She glanced at her little clock, a gilt toy brought from France. Eleven! How the hours dragged.

At noon the frost dissolved in heavy drops of rain. Soon it was falling in a steady slant across the garden, driving Charles indoors, darkening the gaunt drawing-room in which Madame de Mézières was sitting. A great fire blazed upon the hearth, but despite its heat and cheer a damp chill, subtle, insidious, pervaded everything. Madame shivered, then controlling herself, proposed a game of cards.

The Prince acquiesced, but she found him a contemptible adversary. He was absent-minded, distrait, careless. She won so often and so easily that the occupation soon palled. Charles threw down his hand. 'You find me a sorry opponent, Madame. I regret it, but—but my thoughts are elsewhere.'

She answered him briskly, unemotionally:

‘Then your Royal Highness shall play no more. Shall I tell your fortune by the cards, *mon cher*?’

He glanced listlessly at the polished oblongs slipping through her fingers, ivory-white and jewelled. ‘As you will. But—is it not told already?’

She shook her head vigorously. ‘Eh, by no means. You are not many years over thirty, sir——’

‘And may have forty more,’ he broke in. He raised his eyes, desperate, longing, to her face. ‘Forty years as a hunted, solitary man, until I grow too old to be dangerous politically.’ He laughed fiercely. ‘Or—or’—his sombre gaze lit up—‘perhaps to-day will change all that. In a few hours I may be a king.’ He smiled brilliantly at her, until her eyes dimmed with pity. ‘Yes, pray let us see what the cards foretell.’

Madame dealt swiftly and skilfully. She murmured over her task. ‘Eh, eh, but this is difficult. You cross water, sir——’

‘The Thames when I enter London, maybe?’ He was leaning forward, alert and attentive.

‘That is vastly likely.’ Her still bright gaze challenged him. ‘And here—here is a red-haired man, sir. He crosses your Royal Highness’s path. You must be careful.’

‘Murray of Elibank is red-haired.’

Madame caught the shadow on the Prince’s face, the hint of seriousness underlying his words. She swept the cards together decisively. ‘We shall try it another way.’ She dealt afresh. ‘Ah! three nines. That means money—very much money.’

‘I could find it of use,’ Charles laughed.

‘We all could.’ Madame’s lip twisted cynically. ‘Eh, how it rains,’ she grumbled. ‘This England of yours—your kingdom, sir—is a *triste* country. Give me the sun of France.’

‘Give me heather underfoot and mountains on every side.’ The Prince threw back his head. ‘I grow soft, these years of foreign living and warm climes. In Scotland, Madame, in my skulking, I covered many miles, day or night, *hé*, and often on an empty stomach too. Could I do that still, if needful?’

‘Your Scots are an uncouth people, sir, but they love you.’ She placed her cards in formation. ‘I cannot say I love them, with their long faces, and mouths that never smile——’

The Prince’s hand, resting on the table, clenched suddenly. ‘Have you seen many of them?’

‘Eh, some dozens.’ Her shoulders lifted. ‘They are in the little towns everywhere, in France, Flanders, Holland, Sweden, wherever ’tis cheapest. They have lost their estates, but saved their necks. It is a poor life for a man that has been lord of many acres and supreme over his peasantry to live on money sent across the water by those left behind who are faithful. A few take a farm, and others, if not too old, try their fortune in foreign service. They are for the most part, these exiles, too poor to educate their children fittingly. There is often long separation from a wife and family. She must remain behind in Scotland, to wring money from what poor acres remain. He eats his heart out in a strange country, his best company exiles like himself, always economising, always homesick——’

‘But always hopeful,’ the Prince cried. His voice rang out confidently. ‘When I am crowned, Madame, my first kingly act shall be to reinstate those exempted from that damnable Act of Indemnity, to restore their property, give all his forfeited estate——’ Suddenly his tone changed, faltered. ‘I had forgotten.’ His look was blank, piteous. ‘Even a king cannot bring back the dead.’

He sat staring broodingly. The room was no longer empty, save for Madame de Mézières and himself. It held a sombre company of ruined loyalists and those who had suffered death in his Cause, too many to let a Prince sleep sound o’ nights. Athol, Perth, Lochgarry, Sheridan, Lochiel, Murray of Broughton, bankrupt in honour, Cluny MacPherson, Lord George, Elcho, and the martyred dead, Balmerino, Kilmarnock, Lovat, Radcliffe, Sir Archibald Primrose, the numberless common men who had laid down their lives gladly while he feasted and fooled in France. His face was vacant, terrible. They seemed to flock about him, to touch him with their piteous hands. He gave a loud cry.

‘What ails your Royal Highness?’ Madame laid a hand upon his arm. It shook, despite herself. He appeared so strange, so frozen, crouching there, as if he watched things not of this earth.

‘Eh’—he came out of his trance with a long, shuddering sigh—‘I dreamed, I think. I saw—I saw——’ He stopped, adding imperiously, ‘Pray, let us have the rest of my fortune, Madame.’

He was himself again, collected, royal, authoritative. She bent to his mood, and dealt and



talked. Much of what she uttered was nonsense, a gay farrago of light foolery, but the course of the cards worried her. Perversely they refused to conform to what she wanted, to promise the things that he and she wished. Once she glanced up at him, saw his gaze sombre and averted, whereupon she deftly slipped a card out of sight. 'Now, wish,' she instructed him. Across the table she could see the sudden whiteness of the knuckles on his knee.

The clenched hand relaxed slowly. 'Do I tell my wish, Madame?'

'Eh, no. Then your Royal Highness would not get it.'

She gathered up the cards, shuffled them thoroughly, then dealt anew. Her chatter ripped on. 'Wish, sir; wish hard. Oh, but it comes out beautifully. Success—money—— Ah, there is your Royal Highness's red-haired man again—with a dark woman.'

Charles stared at the cards. Clementina Walkinshaw thrust her image into both minds. Madame rattled on, to cover the awkwardness. She was not shocked at the Prince's liaison. Eh, the poor lad must have a woman's company as it was impolitic for him to marry, especially beneath him. 'You should have made your market six years ago, monseigneur,' the old lady's shrewd reflections ran. 'When the glamour of 1745 was over you, you might have had a princess. Now, you chase will-o'-the-wisps, calling them crowns, and that woman may well get your secrets from you when you are not sober, and sell them.' Her brows met. 'Though I do not think so poorly of my sex as some. If the Walkinshaw loves

him well enough to live with him, she has too little wit left her to turn matters to her own advantage. Eh, women in love are all fools, even the cleverest.' Aloud, she announced, 'There is the wish card, sir, flanked by the ace of hearts and the ace of diamonds. Now, that is very, very good.'

He drew a long breath. 'Then I get my wish?'

'Assuredly your Royal Highness does.' She spoke confidently, but unseen by him her fingers closed over the purloined card in her lap.

The rain was slackening, yet the cold still penetrated the large room. Charles stood up, vowing that he was stifled for air. He would take a cloak and stroll about the grounds. Madame acquiesced, somewhat weary of his restless company, but more uneasy when he happened to be out of her sight. He was still worth thirty thousand pounds, and assassins lurked in England as well as on the Continent. None knew what spies might not have tracked him here. A chance shot from behind the trees would free the Government of much anxiety and responsibility. Charles a state prisoner must be more troublesome than Charles at large, deep in his plots. But Charles dead would solve many problems, and usurping kings and their ministers could not afford to be too scrupulous. Ugly tales had drifted to Madame's ears of the lengths to which the Government had gone in their efforts to track down the Prince during the past four years. His person was as much in peril as it had been throughout his wanderings and adven-

tures in that Scotland where the rain never ceased. If he sat in St James's, the compensation to, and reinstatement of, his needy Scots followers would soon make a hole in his treasury. 'But he will do nothing for them, even should he reign.' She built up card-castles with her pack, as flimsy, as easily shattered as Charles's fairy palaces. 'He is selfish, ungrateful, forgetful. All those who hid and helped him in his lurking, many of whom suffered forfeiture and imprisonment in consequence, he has forgotten their very names. I spoke the other night of the girl who conveyed him to Skye. He could not recall what she was like, and had never written to thank her, or inquire after her welfare.' She shook herself crossly. 'And I sit here, a daft old woman, near seventy, as eager as a girl awaiting her lover, to hear the horsehoofs that will bring the news that he is king. He is less fitted to reign than stupid George. The people do not want a Stuart, a Papist. (Oh, he has turned Protestant, but his own Church will get him back, never fear, when he sees that the other has gained him no advantage.) He is intemperate, untrustworthy. A pair of Papists at Rome for father and brother, a mistress in France who is a Papist too. Eh, my poor Charles, you chose your family as ill as you choose your friends.' Her wrinkled, shrewd face was screwed up in sour mirth.

The garden was a grim place. It had been so long neglected that the only things in it to thrive were weeds and rank, tangled grass. Moisture dripped heavily from dank, overloaded branches into black, sombre earth. Outside the high, forbidding walls stretched a sodden country-

side, the chalky soil churned into mud, the pale slant of the horizon going to meet the dour downs where nothing human seemed to move. The road to London, Charles's goal, was a long, putty ribbon winding from sight into misty distance. No form of man or beast passed up or down it. Once Charles heard the slow creak and roll of wheels. It might be a coach, sent to convey him to his capital in some state. He stood, with suspended breath and parted lips, his heart thudding, until a cart, the driver slouching beside his horse, head and shoulders covered clumsily from the falling rain, loomed in sight and went past the gates. The man did not even glance up at the house, or notice the pale face peering through the high iron scroll-work of the entrance. The disappointment was bitter. Far away the thin chiming of a clock from some church steeple caught the Prince's ear. He counted the strokes feverishly. Two o'clock!

Oh, there had been time, more than time, for a messenger with news. He clasped his hands, wringing them, lifting an imploring look to the woolly, unfriendly grey sky, out of which rain fell unweariedly. Like Madame de Mézières, he missed the sun. Wine, disappointment, inaction, had done their work upon his splendid body. It was no longer fitted for hardship and exposure. He pulled his cloak closer about him and plunged down a muddy track running through the dripping bushes of a derelict shrubbery. His feet trod upon squelching masses of decaying leaves, drained of colour, rotted with damp. The cold was piercing, disheartening. 'I do not want to enter St James's with a red nose,' the Prince re-

flected. Yet when he turned to go back to the house, his foot stayed. He could not bring himself to sit in that cheerless room, exchanging meaningless remarks with Madame de Mézières, each alert for messenger to end this uncertainty. What had befallen? 'If there has been bloodshed, I will never pardon Murray,' Charles muttered. 'I would not hurt a hair of my worst enemy's head, were he in my power. They laughed at me for it in 'Forty-five, but I cannot countenance assassination. If my enemies seek my life, is that any reason why I should take theirs?'

The chill grey day wore on. The afternoons were shortening perceptibly, and by four o'clock darkness was not far off. The Prince paced restlessly, listening, halting, surveying the road for long periods, from different points of vantage, starting at slight sounds, enduring one disappointment after another as vehicle or pedestrian or men on horseback passed without stopping. The cold finally drove him indoors. Madame, sitting by the fire, her hands idle, saw him pass the open door of the drawing-room. She rose to accost him, but the Prince shook his head. He preferred to retire to his bed-chamber and change his damp clothes.

He shut the door upon himself and his misery. For hours the clink of the brandy-bottle against the rim of the tumbler was the only sound inside, and outside, the falling rain upon the dead leaves. Darkness closed round the sombre house. Downstairs, the old lady sat by the fire, too weary and discouraged to feel the blow acutely. Upstairs, the Prince, sodden with drink, vaguely



consoled and warmed thereby, huddled with disordered periwig and clothes, gulping the neat spirit.

He was roused out of his drunken stupor by a knocking on the door. It was soft, cautious, but urgent. Charles cursed as he stumbled to his feet. He had reached the stage when he cared for nothing so long as his lethargy and comfort were not disturbed. He kicked the empty bottle aside and fumbled for the door-knob. Outside stood Madame de Mézières, a candle wavering in her hand. It threw a pin-point of light over the bleak surroundings, the gaunt passages, the black-banistered staircase branching off into empty darkness, a great portrait on the wall of a man in obsolete dress, with a thoughtful, sombre face. The reek of brandy, the Prince's dishevelment, sickened the old lady, but she steadied her hand and spoke quietly. 'There is a messenger below, sir, who craves an audience of your Royal Highness.' She breathed a name deeply dipped in Jacobite schemes.

Charles threw off his drunkenness. He lurched as he walked, but his head was a seasoned one, not easily overcome. The news had been a different kind of wine to him. He almost ran down the black staircase, Madame de Mézières pattering in his rear. Her lip curled. If it were no good news that the messenger brought, it must sober him effectually. Then there would be less difficulty in smuggling him out of the house, for he might need to leave without delay.

The Prince, his head high, walked into the drawing-room. The fire had sunk to red caverns, which made a dim illumination, helped poorly

by the light of a wretched lamp. The world outside the window was formless black, unbroken by a single star.

The man who waited, wrapped in a splashed riding-cloak, his high boots muddied to the knee, came forward awkwardly. Charles gave him his hand to kiss and a word of welcome. 'We have waited for your lordship since two o' the clock, my lord,' he remarked impatiently. 'Well? well?' His tone was curt, imperious.

The other looked at him with a face of blank surprise. 'Does your Royal Highness not know——? Surely, sir, you did not expect——?' he stuttered.

'What of the plot?' cried Charles. His voice was shrill, shaking. 'The scheme to seize the Elector's person, and the simultaneous rising in England and the Highlands. *Dites!*'

The older man's face puckered and lengthened. 'The scheme is—postponed, sir.' He chose his words carefully. 'The Government heard a rumour. Precautions were taken. Oh, to attempt such a thing now would have been madness, ending in Newgate.' He went on rapidly: 'We never knew, we never dreamed, that your Royal Highness had landed in the expectation of——' He broke off. 'We heard that you were here after Murray of Elibank had crossed to Paris to inform you that everything was laid aside. So far the secret of your residence is known only to myself and a few others of your party, but it is highly dangerous for you to linger. For God's sake, sir, make for the coast, and take passage for Dunkirk this very night!'

In his eagerness he gripped the Prince's arm. Charles flung him off as if he had been a snake. He staggered, knocking over a small, heavy table.

The crash of its fall brought Madame de Mézières into the room. 'What has happened, sir?' She looked from the Prince, dazed, stricken, painfully sober now, to the messenger, white-lipped, dignified, affronted. 'Is all lost?' she cried.

The placid quiet of the derelict old house was broken by hasty sounds of departure. Luggage was brought down. Madame's coach, driven by a trusted, elderly man, long in her service, jolted carefully over the weed-grown drive and out at the gates. It lumbered along the high road, bearing the Prince back to his life of obscurity, disguise, and wandering. Another plot had failed, another bid for that airy crown had resulted in disappointment and defeat. He brooded sullenly for a time over the problem of who had betrayed his plans. It mattered little, set beside the magnitude of his shattered hopes. He covered his face with his mantle as he was driven through the night, a black night of keen cold, with a wind like a razor's edge. Once he muttered, 'The cards lied. She said that I should get my wish.' His laugh rang ghostly in the musty coach.

The cards did not lie. Madame de Mézières had deliberately cheated. Alone, striving to overlook the hurt to her pride in the Prince's departure without a word of gratitude, her eyes fell upon the scattered pack. With a gesture of

fury she flung them, crumpled, into the heart of the dying fire. The action exhausted her. She sat down, an old, weary woman, who had meddled for the last time in Jacobite plots. Henceforward she would be devout, helping the Stuarts only by her prayers. God send that that poor Prince reached the coast in safety. A more mundane reflection was a dry surmise as to the bills for wine incurred during his meteoric and disastrous visit.

## CHAPTER VI.

You follow the young prince up and down, like his  
ill angel.' SHAKESPEARE.

'Next day the company agreed to travel through Flanders in the diligence, by the advice of Peregrine, who was not without hope of meeting with some adventure or amusement in that carriage. . . . Every previous measure being thus taken, they set out from Lisle about six in the morning, and found themselves in the company of a female adventurer, a very handsome lady, a Capuchin, and a Rotterdam Jew.'—SMOLLETT.

THE Prince's hopes refused to be defeated. The plot was not abandoned, merely postponed. At a more favourable opportunity the blow should be struck, and all must yet go well. A cynical, contemptuously amused spectator of the constant intrigues and wire-pulling that went on in political and Jacobite circles was the Earl Marischal, now at Paris. Frederick the Great, no friend of the British, had offered that nation a deliberate insult when he dispatched the Earl to Versailles the year before as his ambassador. The Earl was elderly, sensible, a man so long exiled for the Stuarts that he had grown contented with his continental existence—ameliorated by the society of kings and nobles—and could afford to look on with detached and impersonal enjoyment at the innumerable futile attempts made to upset the Hanoverian dynasty. Charles had tried repeatedly to gain the Earl's friendship



and services, since 1744 when he invited that nobleman to accompany him in a fishing-boat to Scotland. The other calmly declined to embroil himself afresh. He had known the Prince from boyhood, watched from afar his upbringing, development, and deterioration, with melancholy, but no surprise. Charles Edward was not the stuff which endures monotony and disappointments without becoming impaired and embittered during the process.

The intermediary between Charles and the Earl Marischal was Goring. Eventually the Earl rescued him, a dying wreck, when Charles's service had become impossible to any honourable man. Charles never forgave plain speaking. The Earl was accustomed to employ nothing else. Again and again he rejected the Prince's overtures. He knew about the Elibank plot and its successors, but professed to see no harm in any of them. None of them came to a head. If the Prince preferred the society of adventurers and discredited foreigners, the solace of such mad schemes, to a dignified seclusion on Papal or French bounty, there was no more to be said. As to Clementina Walkinshaw, such connections were then thought little of from the point of view of morality. The Earl was friendly with young Glengarry, who bestowed upon his lordship a good deal of his society throughout the spring of 1753. From Glengarry he learned that Charles was intriguing afresh.

Pickle (to give the spy his cypher name) lingered in Paris on the chance, promised him by Lord Elibank, of seeing the Prince. Charles's fortunes were at a low ebb. His creditors were

pestering and persistent, until the ignored, long-suffering James sent money from Rome to be paid into Charles's account at Waters's. The old banker had died, but his son and successor cheerfully took over the Prince's commissions and involved monetary affairs. Waters acted as a kind of warehouse, storing Charles's bust by Le Moin, his silver shield, and the La Tour portrait painted a few years before, sad relics of his brief, passionate splendour. The Prince lamented his 'sad situation,' and continued to puzzle various Governments by his dark movements. In February a rumour was startling Europe that he had died of pneumonia in a French seaport. The same fate nearly overtook the energetic Pickle in Paris. On his recovery, somewhat reduced in health and funds, he sought diversion by attending the opera ball. Amongst the crowd of masks and dancers he was accosted by the Prince.

Charles failed lamentably in royal tact and courtesy. He omitted to inquire, tenderly and concernedly, as to Pickle's impaired condition. Pickle was piqued, his monumental vanity being a strong characteristic. But the Prince was too much bent upon his own affairs to have time or inclination to concern himself with Pickle's aches and pains. He talked fast and volubly in the rapid French that now came more easily to his tongue than the English which had been acquired—with an Irish accent, as someone maliciously noted during the 'Forty-five—from Sheridan and his early tutors. As the Earl Marischal later wrote: 'The Prince's position, coupled with an intrepidity which never lets him doubt where he

desires, causes others to form projects for him, which he is always ready to execute.' No sooner did one scheme collapse than Charles was immediately willing to engineer another. The new venture, he explained, was to be on the lines of the abortive Elibank plot, but would be carried through at night. Once the guards at St James's had been surprised and overcome. . . . The Prince fell into a muse, seeing a complete triumph, himself proclaimed king, the long years of wandering and disillusion ended, his rightful throne his own. Pickle glanced at the rapt face, and remembering the alert ears in London into which he should whisper every item, solicited further details.

Charles roused himself with a start. 'Eh, pardon me, *mon ami*. I was in London, I think.' His set mouth relaxed into a smile. 'I am not depending upon England and the Highlands in this,' he whispered, 'although I have great assurances from England. I still confidently expect foreign aid. The court of Berlin's influence is very great. I anticipate matters will go well in a very little time.'

Pickle found the Prince's smiles and vagueness exceedingly irritating. His employers would want names, facts, dates, individuals to be cited. 'Is the army much upon your Royal Highness's side?' he murmured helpfully.

Charles nodded. 'I depend upon finding many friends within it. The Duke of Cumberland has vastly disobliged a number of gallant gentlemen and men of property.' Again he became less expansive, to Pickle's deep disappointment. The time to speak of what steps had been taken to

gain over officers in either service was not yet ripe. Charles gave him a little more information, too nebulous and impersonal to be of much use. The Prince had been intriguing with certain of the Scots officers in Dutch service. They were both courageous and experienced. No names were mentioned, but Pickle by shrewd question and tentative suggestion succeeded in worming out of the stupid and totally unsuspecting Charles some of the moves being made in England. The Duke of Hamilton and other south-country gentlemen were to be sounded by various Scots. Others, selected from amongst those excluded from the 1747 Act of Indemnity, and the heads of disaffected clans, were to concert matters with the north-country Lowlanders. Another well-known name was to act as intermediary between the Lowlands and the bordering Highlands. Charles had sent agents to Scotland, armed with money, to prepare the people. Pickle felt smug and satisfied concerning the Highlands. No movement could be started there without the consent and co-operation of his own clan.

The Prince stood up in token that the interview was over. Pickle mentioned his own projected return to England. 'Well, then'—Charles smiled graciously—'I hope soon to send you an agreeable message, as you'll be amongst the very first acquainted when matters come to a crisis.' He stooped his stately head nearer Pickle's dark countenance. 'For my part, I hope to have one bold push for all.' He said a little more, chiefly assurances of his friendship, and then went off. Pickle was extremely sleepy, and still shivering

and semi-invalidish, but when he reached his lodging he sat up stubbornly, writing down the gist of Charles's confidences to be sent to his paymaster, Henry Pelham. A fat morsel for those shaking in their shoes at Whitehall.

Charles's complacency was rudely disturbed by news of the arrest of Archibald Cameron. He had been lurking in Scotland since his dispatch there by the Prince in the previous September. One of his own name and clan played the Judas. Taken prisoner at Inversnaid, he was conveyed to Edinburgh, and later removed to London. He languished in the Tower for three months, the Prince less apprehensive for Cameron's life than that his own secrets might be betrayed, particularly his lurking-places. He went to Cologne on a misinterpretation of a message from the Earl Marischal. Goring wrote an agitated letter, begging the Prince to avoid lonely night-strolls, during which he might easily be kidnapped and carried to Holland. Charles wandered restlessly throughout the summer, halting for brief periods at Coblenz and Frankfort. In July, the month after Dr Cameron had been executed at Tyburn on the flimsy pretext of his 'Forty-five attainder, the Prince had taken a house at Liège. He found his main outlet and amusement in the newspapers with which Dormer, at his own request, supplied him. To read of the doings in the busy world that had cast him out and now ignored him was meagre profit. The restless, ambitious spirit, bottled up, corked down, had soured, fermented. He was very poor, but reluctant as ever to relinquish any scheme for the attainment of his



life's object. Frederick of Prussia was using him as a cat's paw, carelessly promising to aid in procuring him men and money, but like so many, proving faithless. Charles's sky was very dark.

The first gleam in the clouds was the return of Lochgarry from Scotland with lists of the clan-numbers available in the event of another rising, and a report of the expedition made by himself and Dr Cameron. Lochgarry was now a colonel in Lord Ogilvy's regiment. He was in correspondence with Pickle, whom the Prince expressed a wish to see. The meeting, cunningly devised, secret, took place, Charles arriving accompanied merely by a French officer. The trio betook themselves to Paris, the Prince disguised as a Capuchin, to muffle his tell-tale features. He was reckless and garrulous, showing Pickle the report and clan-lists, of which Pickle secured copies, speedily forwarded to the Government. Charles seemed pleased with both, but otherwise Pickle found him soured and suspicious. He discussed his affairs freely, telling Pickle with unconscious pathos that he had been rambling about in Flanders, usually near Brussels, and on the French borders. He negatived another Scottish rising, until a war in the North, when he anticipated extensive aid from Sweden in men and munitions. Pickle murmured the name of Frederick. Charles's face darkened. 'I expect nothing from thence'—his tone was cold—'as the King of Prussia is governed by his interest or resentment only.'

Pickle suppressed a smile, recalling Charles's ambitious matrimonial prospects. 'I understood

that your Royal Highness considered honouring Prussia by an alliance with Frederick's sister?'

The Prince's shoulders lifted. 'I dispatched Goring to Berlin some time since with my proposals for a match with the lady. He was but coldly received, and had no favourable answer. I since sent Sir John Graeme, whose reception was better, on the same errand. They were both received very civilly, but told it was not a proper time, so they had no encouragement to speak further upon the subject. I soon went myself to Berlin, where I was well received, but the offer of the marriage was declined.' His hands in their thick, loose sleeves clenched impotently. 'The King of Prussia advised me to withdraw myself privately from Berlin, and retire to Silesia, and to keep myself concealed for some time in some convent there. He told me that in the event of a war breaking out, he would assist me in procuring six thousand swords from Gothenburg, with the collusion of the court of France.'

Pickle murmured tactful condolences on the bad taste of Prussia in refusing an alliance with a Stuart. 'What of Sweden, sir?' he asked.

'I sent Goring there also, where he found I had many friends.' The tired voice brightened as the will-o'-the-wisp of hope glimmered once more. 'I believe I have many friends in England, but I have no fighting friends.' He laughed very bitterly. 'The best service my friends in England can do me at present is to supply me with money.'

Pickle ventured to ask the Prince's plans. Charles answered listlessly that he had none. 'I have been of late hunted from place to place all

over Flanders by a Jew sent out of England to watch me. I design to go to Lorraine, that I may get rid of him. Will you come with me, *mon ami*?' His haggard eyes gazed with melancholy at the spy. 'I am lonely. Kelly I had to send away at the Earl Marischal's solicitations. Goring is very ill. Graeme and Harrington and Lochgarry, who are in my confidence and act as my agents, cannot all be with me. England, you say? I have a correspondence with it through Mr Dormer at Antwerp.'

'And the French court, sir?'

'Eh, I have few friends there.' Charles sighed. 'D'Argenson, a brother of the late minister, perhaps, but Puy sieux is my enemy. Monsieur Paris Montmartell is well affected towards me, and would raise money for my service upon a proper occasion. The Pompadour is not my friend, since I slighted her billets, fearing to disoblige the Queen and her relations. Louis is no well-wisher to my Cause, unless it be at any time to serve his own purpose.'

So it went on, the pitiful, discouraging chronicle of the thwarted hopes and wild plans of a man soured by repeated failures and brooding over his wrongs from all sides. Pickle thought of the poor woman who had been Charles's devoted, uncomplaining companion throughout his wanderings, until her health obliged her to remain at Paris. He murmured her name. Charles's face lit up.

'Miss Walkinshaw? Ah, she has been my true friend.' His cheek glowed. 'I wonder will you credit it when I tell you that my adherents murmur at my keeping her with me, and urge

for her dismissal?' His look was haughty, disgusted. 'Am I to be dictated to, coerced as to my choice of associates? Never!'

His lowered tones were vehement, his face scarlet. Pickle glanced at him with a contempt that Charles was fortunately too angry to notice. If the poor remnant of the Jacobite party, even the squalid adventurers and intriguers who mainly composed it now, could see the Prince whom they were scheming to place upon the throne of his ancestors! He had been drinking heavily before the start. He was stouter, puffy under the eyes, the fine contours of his still handsome face coarsened and thickened. The hot September day was drawing towards evening. The stuffy diligence rumbled and swung nearer Paris through empty harvest-fields, shrill with the chatter of starlings in the stubble. The moon had only reached her first quarter, She lay, a white, goblin thing, sliced in two, against the steel-blue sky. The atmosphere of the crowded vehicle was close and oppressive. The Prince felt stifled by the cumbersome folds of his enveloping hood, but dared not throw it back. Though he courted danger recklessly, and risked discovery repeatedly, he had no real desire to be recognised and taken. His confidences ceased abruptly. His flush faded, and he fell silent. He was weary, hungry, discouraged, bitterly alone. In Paris he might find a brief sanctuary at Sir John Graeme's house, entering and leaving with his accustomed stealth. He wanted, too, to see Clementina, who would be the mother of his child in a few weeks' time. Charles had not yet wearied of her, or grown to mistrust and suspect her. She was lodged in

some degree of comfort, and he treated her with affection. It was short-lived, like all Charles's regard for anyone who 'differed in sentiment'—*pace* my Lord Elcho—from himself. Poor Clementina had seen this repeatedly in his dealings and relations with other people. She was shortly to discover it for herself.

If the star which reputedly shone at Charles Edward's birth were a lucky star, it early paled and faded. The Prince's fortunes, unstable and fluctuating for many months, now sank to their lowest ebb. Goring's continued ill-health obliged Charles to reinstate and employ the dismissed Beson as his messenger. Beson had blunt orders to bring Charles what money he could, wrung from any source he could. Charles showed some gleams of kind-heartedness and concern towards Goring. He even scolded him affectionately for not drawing on the Prince's meagre funds in order to supply his own needs. 'As long as I have a Bit of Bred, you know that I am always ready to share it with a friend,' Charles wrote. But even Goring, whose patience and loyalty were supreme amongst those who served Charles, found these qualities taxed to breaking-point. The Prince's whole nature had altered. The best traits in a character superficially charming, but never strong, had become distorted and inhibited. He, who had been the despair of the wiserminded for his clemency to foes, had grown cruel and harsh. His courage was turned to an insane recklessness. The atmosphere of suspicion and intrigue which surrounded him poisoned him in mind and body. He trusted to alcohol to give



him the rosy dreams that alone made his harried existence endurable. That visionary crown, the hand of the fairy princess, were as vague, as nebulous as ever. He still hoped and plotted, but his days were spent in a world of shadows, his nights solaced by wine and evil company. The least glimmer of hope intoxicated him worse than brandy. There were traffickings with Ireland, vague plots engineered by spies and adventurers who used Charles as a cat's-paw in order to further their own ends. Balhaldy, a Jacobite agent for many years, distrusted by the Prince equally with his dead colleague Lord Sempil, was now approached tentatively by Charles. He refused, as the Earl Marischal had repeatedly done, to concern himself with the Prince's dark and hazardous doings. If Charles were to be reconciled to James and the French court, to take the advice of men better fitted to govern him than his feather-headed Irish adherents who had induced him to undertake the mad expedition of 1745, then Balhaldy might consider co-operating with him. Balhaldy lamented that the Prince was so headstrong directly he saw the least hope of succeeding, that he was impossible to manage or advise. Tales went about of arms hidden in Clanranald's country, and landed at the House of Touch, near Stirling. Certainly the Prince had ordered vast quantities in 1750. Were these they?

The oft-told tale of his being seen in innumerable places at the same time continued to puzzle the Government. In reality he was hidden snugly in Paris, waiting until Clementina Walkinshaw's days should be accomplished. 'The

bonny lass of Albany,' the last of the Stuart line, came into the world on a frosty October morning. Unwanted, nameless, she shared to the full the prevailing and unremitting ill-luck of her father's dwindling and star-crossed house.

Clementina lay in bed, her sharpened face, in which the black eyes looked enormous, framed in her straight black hair. The infant slumbered placidly beside her. Charles had been drinking when the stout midwife summoned him to see his daughter. He lurched into the room and poked a finger at the swaddled bundle. His face was flushed, his step unsteady. '*Hé*, a girl!' he remarked discontentedly.

The woman who had gone down into hell to bring forth that poor little life turned her face to the discoloured wall. Charles glanced uncertainly at the tangle of black hair and took himself from the room. He had added to his burdens and expenses, he grumbled sullenly. A child was a tie which made it harder to discard a mistress. Then his face clouded afresh as he remembered the remonstrances of those who wanted him to sever his connection with Clementina. 'I would not put away a cat to please such fellows,' he muttered vehemently.

So unstable and capricious had he grown that in a few weeks' time he himself was ready to discard the unfortunate woman. The question of the child's name had been settled more or less amicably and easily. She was to be called Charlotte, but the manner in which she must be made a Christian provoked a bitter quarrel. Clementina was fiercely determined that the

ceremony should take place in a Roman Catholic church, by the hands of a priest. Charles retorted furiously that he was a Protestant since the year 1750, and his daughter should be baptised by a clergyman of the Church of England. Clementina, white, thin, but inflexible—an astonishing attitude for so gentle and subservient a creature—stood up from her chair and laid the infant carefully aside. ‘I have not asked much of you, sir’—her voice was low and quiet—‘but I beg of your Royal Highness to permit me my way in this. Let a priest baptise her.’

Words, ugly, unseemly, degrading, left Charles’s lips. Clementina shuddered. How much of distorted hate, hate of Henry, of France, a Catholic country, of the many Catholics whom he considered had deceived and disappointed him, were in them it were hopeless to fathom. Conquering her terror and disgust, she gathered her courage afresh. She pleaded afresh: ‘Sir, it means very much to me. If I have risked my own hope of immortality, my poor soul, by my connection with you——’

He broke in brutally: ‘Bah! how women whine about their souls. A woman is always a poor sinner. You think you commit a mortal sin by becoming my mistress.’ He laughed. It was a vile sound. ‘You were not so nice at Bannockburn House seven years back.’

She covered her face. The taunt hurt worse than any blow. ‘I? What do I count now? I am as little in God’s sight as in your Royal Highness’s.’ She cried the words in a voice high, shaking. ‘But my child shall not, must not, pay for her parents’ sin. If she be nameless

in the world's eyes, let her at least be sheltered by the Church's blessing, sir.'

His mouth was set, his look implacable. 'The Church of England,' he conceded.

'No! No!' She breathed hard, through dilated nostrils.

He took a heavy step nearer. Clementina shrank. She had felt the weight of his fist before. 'You may strike me, sir'—her voice quivered—'but I implore you to have pity on your child.'

'I have.' He stared with drink-clouded eyes. 'She shall be no Papist. What have they ever done for me? I am finished with them.'

Again her hands went to her face. 'With me?' she panted.

'Yes. I shall write to Goring to dismiss my household at Avignon—those that are Papists—and you'—he turned upon her—'you have behaved so unworthily that you put me out of all patience, therefore I discard you too.'

Her woman's pride came to her aid. 'I would be no burden to your Royal Highness. I only fear that I have cost you too much already.' She sighed, thinking of the fears of English adherents who saw in her spy and traitress. She added calmly: 'I have friends that will maintain me.'

'Who are they?'

'That cannot concern your Royal Highness. But I entreat, sir'—her voice softened—'that you consider what you are doing with regard to your poor servants at Avignon. May it not disgust the great number of your people to see you discard faithful men, for some of them went through all the dangers with you in Scotland,

upon account of their religion—without the least provision made for them?’

‘I shall maintain Stafford and Sheridan, and all the Protestant servants. Goring shall write to Stuart, or make Morison do it, to know from him if my orders are executed. As for you, after your declaration of having friends, and other impertinences, I abandon you too. Goring can find out who your friends are, that you may be delivered into their hands, and Daniel I shall charge to conduct you.’ The hoarse, angered, breathless voice stopped.

She pleaded and remonstrated with him vainly. In the end he struck her, repeating his blows, fortunately aimed irregularly, through his sodden condition, while she crouched on the floor. Her hair, shorn of its gloss and curl, hung long and tangled round her face, sweeping the dingy carpet. Behind its screen her eyes were blazing. If he struck the child, she felt capable of killing him. He did not, but flung out of the room, his fury dying in maudlin self-pity. He was no longer able to feel the keen-eyed remorse that had stabbed him the first time he struck Madame de Talmond.

The year died slowly. The Prince’s sordid shifts continued until he was living a life of penury, squalor, and utter wretchedness. His hate of Papists, as he fiercely styled all those who were Roman Catholics, grew in vehemence. As he had threatened, he wrote to Goring that his household at Avignon were to be dismissed. They were Papists; and Clementina, for the same cause, must be cast out likewise. Goring’s pained remonstrances met with no return. The miserable



connection was patched up, and continued for several years longer, but Charles was fast alienating and disgusting the very few who still clung stubbornly to him, still believed in him. He was poor, shabby, practically friendless. The brilliant figure that had blazed in Paris only seven winters earlier had fallen to the status of a battered adventurer. He had no love left for Clementina, scarce any feeling of dislike for her, but his ingrained obstinacy, his bane from boyhood, made him refuse to part from her at the desire of his well-wishers. He had sunk to the stage when a few coins to purchase brandy loomed of paramount importance, as meaning a little hour of blessed oblivion. In the daytime he must lurk in some poor lodging, or slink about the meaner streets after darkness fell. To this pitiable pass had come one who had been the star of Scotland, the Highlands' darling, the hope and pride of thousands ruined in his broken Cause. Their forlorn ghosts mocked him, driving him deeper and deeper into the thralldom of wine, the lethargy of despair.

Monsieur Le Cour was about to put up his shutters for the night. His was a quaint little shop, an armourer's, wedged between two others, almost squeezed out of existence by them, but his dusky shelves held treasures. Monsieur was a connoisseur in arms. To him a bargain was a bargain, but a beautiful thing meant more. He was small and bright-eyed, excellent at a transaction, but honest to a sou. He yawned as he stretched for the shutters. Eh, *mon Dieu*, but it had been a long day.

He sighed, though he came forward courteously, as a belated customer entered. His tall form was wrapped in a voluminous cloak, in places thin and darned. His hands were long and shapely. He was too young for them to shake like that, Monsieur reflected. The new-comer laid a double-barrelled pistol with a fine jade handle on the warped counter. Eh, a handsome piece. Monsieur examined it critically, and proposed a price.

The other nodded curtly. He took the coins, pushed the pistol from him, hesitated, as if loath to exchange this musty warmth for the cutting sleet of the December night outside, and went. Monsieur stared after him. The light from a crude, smoking lamp had revealed features bloated and patched, but still handsome, unmistakable. 'I saw him driving in his coach-and-six as he went to Versailles, seven years ago. *Hé*, but he was worth looking at, aglitter with diamonds.' His glance fell on the pistol. 'And he has fallen so low as to sell this to old Pierre Le Cour? Eh, my *pauvre* Prince, you were better to put a bullet through your heart with it first.' He fondled the weapon in wrinkled, gnarled hands.

## CHAPTER VII.

‘Yea, ruined in a royal game I was before my cradle ;  
Was ever gambler hurling gold who lost such things  
as I?’  
G. K. CHESTERTON.

MR MACNAMARA, stout, and disinclined for the fatigues of travel, was unwillingly compelled to trust himself on foreign soil. The English Jacobite party, still loyal, although their numbers were sadly attenuated and reduced, had come to the reluctant decision that a personal interview with the elusive Prince was urgent and necessary. Charles paid no heed to remonstrances sent in writing. He calmly disregarded appeals and protestations, couched in the tenderest and most respectful terms. The stories of his irregular life and unsatisfactory habits were no doubt exaggerations by malicious-minded enemies, but it might be as well for somebody—a discreet person—to inspect matters and Charles for himself. After delay and negotiation the lot fell upon Mr Daniel Macnamara, an obscure figure in the councils and affairs of the Prince’s supporters, but a trusted correspondent, grave, unbiassed, impartial, and unlikely to bring back an untrue report. Wherefore behold Mr Macnamara, unfamiliar with the language, the customs, the food of France, clad with a quaker-like severity and sobriety, adventuring in dangerous places which had hitherto only been names on a map to him.

Mr Macnamara had hardly known what to expect, but the interview left him humiliated and despairing. He had seen earlier portraits of the Prince, reproductions of that splendid head, but the living reality appalled him. Charles was not much over thirty, yet already he looked middle-aged. He had grown stout, coarse, repellent. The slim, fairy-tale Prince of the 'Forty-five had degenerated into a gross, brutalised satyr, the marks of whose unhealthy life and indulgence in excesses of all kinds were written plainly on the face that once had set Scotland ablaze. The smooth skin was patched and pimpled, the sunken eyes alternately blazing with morbid rage or sullen and vacant. All his worst points—his stupidity, insane recklessness, and unreasoning obstinacy—had come to the fore, obliterating his natural good qualities of generosity, clemency, kindness. Mr Macnamara kissed the extended hand, no longer slim and cool-fingered, and shuddered from the touch of the puffy flesh.

'Well?' Charles had lounged to a chair.

Mr Macnamara found his mission distasteful and difficult. The burden of his colleagues' advice—nay, their orders—rang in his ears. 'Persuade His Royal Highness to get rid of the Walkinshaw.' He moistened his lips, turning over in his own mind suitable methods of opening the unequal campaign. The Prince repeated the curt monosyllable, adding sharply, 'Have you brought me any money? I am in the greatest necessity for want of supplies.'

Mr Macnamara shook his head. He murmured that his errand was unconnected with finance.

The Prince's brow grew black. 'My situation is such at present that it makes me resolved to know from those that profess to be my friends what I am to depend on.' He spoke arrogantly.

Macnamara bit his lip. 'Your friends, sir, were surprised and mortified to see Beson arrive with a message from you, only to desire money, so soon after the sum received from them.' The tone was stiff, the reproof unmistakable.

The Prince's mottled complexion assumed a deeper red. 'It is true I sent to England six months ago for money, but it was not for the money alone. That served only for a pretext.' His look was cunning. 'However, I was extremely scandalised not to have received any since I thought fit to call for it. It is strange, such proceedings.' His voice grew louder, his manner hectoring and excited. 'People should, I think, well know that if it was only money that I had at heart I would not act as I have done and will do until I can compass the prosperity of my country, which always shall be my only study.' His truculence died away. He ended on a whining note. 'But you know that without money one can do nothing, and in my situation the more there can be the better.'

Mr Macnamara maintained a discreet and irritating silence. Once he coughed. The Prince, sunk in his chair, finally roused himself to say sharply: 'If you have brought me nothing, what was your object in asking for an audience?'

Mr Macnamara cleared his throat. He measured the distance between himself and the door, reckoned that he could be through it before His Royal Highness had risen from his seat, and decided



to risk the Prince's fury. His lip curled. He should discharge his errand, and henceforth wash his hands of the Stuart's concerns. Whatever else the Walkinshaw woman might be—spy, traitress, paid informer—she was as arrant a fool as any he had come across. She *must* be dishonest. Nothing except Government money could induce her to stay with this wreck of royalty.

His words were blunt and unvarnished. Charles sat up, blinking, and listened to them, blackness gathering on his brow.

‘Sir, your Royal Highness's mistress is loudly and publicly talked of. All your friends look upon the connection with her as a very dangerous and imprudent step. They conclude, with reason, that no correspondence is to be had in that quarter without risk of discovery. We have no opinion in England of female politicians, or of such women's secrecy in general. Your Royal Highness is yourself much blamed for not informing your friends at first, that they might take the alarm, and stop any present or future transactions with such a person.’ He paused before winding up: ‘What we now expect from you, sir, is to let us know if our persuasion can prevail to get rid of her.’

Charles rose heavily to his feet. He had utterly lost his litheness, his buoyant movements, his restlessness. All his actions were slow and lethargic, unless a fit of insane anger moved him to quickness. A few weeks before he had been only too ready to discard the woman who was the mother of his child. Now, the ruined mind, distorted and suspicious, resolved that when

ordered to act thus to please his supporters, nothing should persuade him to such a deed. He spoke coldly. 'Is this your errand?'

Mr Macnamara bowed. 'Yes, sir.'

'Very well, then.' The Prince's hands clenched. 'Go back to those who sent you here and tell them that I utterly refuse to part with Miss Walkinshaw.' He added, with an oath: 'I would not put away one of my dogs to please them.'

Mr Macnamara stood nonplussed. 'Does—does your Royal Highness love her?' he stammered at last.

'I have no violent passion for her, nor indeed any particular regard, and I could see her removed from me without any concern'—Charles's tone was indifferent—'but'—suddenly his anger blazed forth—'I will not put her away at the orders of my party, nor will I receive directions for the regulation of my private conduct from any man alive.'

The messenger tried a last appeal. 'They are vastly uneasy concerning her ascendancy over you, sir. Her sister is about Frederick's widow, and has but an indifferent character. The connection must be attended with bad consequences, whether she be truly honest or not.'

Charles was adamant. His obstinacy, not any personal feeling for Clementina, urged him. Mr Macnamara argued vainly. The Prince changed the subject with abrupt discourtesy, and demanded more money. The sums that his partisans in England granted him were not sufficient.

Mr Macnamara was goaded into plain speaking. 'These gentlemen are not your bankers, sir. What they give your Royal Highness is

given out of pure generosity. Surely you ought to be more content? They will send nothing else, I warn you, sir, if you persist in these sentiments about their "duty." They resent the dispatch of messengers with your Royal Highness's demands. They expect a Prince who will take advice, and rule according to law, and not one that thinks his will is sufficient.'

Charles muttered sullenly that no one was more willing to submit to the laws of his country than himself, and he had the vanity to say he knew a little of them. He relapsed into silence. There seemed no more to be said. As Mr Macnamara was taking his reluctant leave, after a frigid and formal farewell, the despairing question broke involuntarily from him. 'What has your family done, sir, thus to draw down the vengeance of Heaven on every branch of it, through so many ages?'

The Prince made no reply. He was again huddled in his chair, his head between his hands. From upstairs there floated the thin wail of a child's crying.

After this Charles's prospects grew darker and sadder. He looked upon money dispatched from English supporters as his right. These gentlemen, as Macnamara had warned him, were growing weary of his incessant demands upon their purses. What became of all they sent? many were wishful to know. The Prince had continued to act stubbornly and stupidly. His connection with Clementina Walkinshaw was unbroken, and now that a child had been added to the ill-advised *ménage* his enemies found it

much easier to track his movements. He was driven by emissaries of the Government from Liége. Lorraine proved equally insecure as a place of refuge. He wandered to Paris, pursued everywhere by spies and creditors. He appealed to the Earl Marischal, who declined in a stiffly-worded, decisive letter to advise or assist him. He meditated, vaguely, settling in Orleans, but was drearily certain of being hunted forth. He wrote to Edgar, sulkily apologising for his neglectful silence towards his father. 'But in reality my situation is such that I have nothing to say but imprecations against the fatality of being born in such a detestable age.'

Charles's next folly was to dismiss one Dumont, 'as I have neither money nor interest to employ strangers any more.' This ungracious and impolitic move alarmed Goring, to the extent of putting his remonstrances on the point in writing. Dumont was in the Prince's secrets, and the secrets of those who served His Royal Highness. He might sell his dangerous and intimate knowledge to the Government, pushed to the act by the double motive of poverty and revenge. In such an event the fate of Archibald Cameron was likely to befall many. Goring, wretchedly ill, was being sheltered and protected in Paris by Madame de Vassé, but the incessant mental strain of endeavouring to persuade the Prince to see reason, and act more moderately and rationally, sapped Goring's waning strength worse than any disease. Charles had shown himself as capricious and ungrateful to Goring as towards everyone else. Goring risked imprisonment in venturing to Paris, as Charles well knew. When

there, he received a curt message from the Prince, declining to see or write to him. He would send no money to enable Goring to leave his dangerous lurking-place. The half-crazed brain and mind, distorted by alcohol, had come to believe that Goring was the one who had betrayed his retreats.

Goring's dignified request to be allowed to retire from his unstable service was a shattering blow. Roused, Charles wrote back, refusing to part from him, a suspicious, angered letter. Would Goring serve him or not? He desired a plain answer, neither half-measures nor compromise. Goring replied bluntly, frankly. He pointed out that he had already served Charles loyally for five years, to the utter destruction of his health and prospects. The Prince had rewarded him with cruelty, suspicion, and ingratitude. Goring was in no position to do more than, like King James, pray for him. Charles remonstrated, even pleaded, but Goring, the Earl Marischal at his back, stood firm. What five years' service had not done, five hundred would not accomplish. He had often been hard put to it to mention one single instance of the Prince's compassion or assistance towards any adherent out of the multitude ruined by and for him. The order, once rescinded, later curtly repeated, to dismiss the Roman Catholic servants of the Avignon household was the final straw. Goring would not do it, any more than he would be instrumental in bringing Clementina Walkinshaw to the Prince. Charles, Goring reminded him, had twice before turned him away penniless, like a discarded and troublesome footman. This time



he would take his own dismissal. His letter ended on a note of tragic appeal: 'For God's sake, sir, have compassion on yourself. Don't let your spleen get the better of your prudence and judgment.'

The Prince's response was to act as he always did towards anyone that he considered had failed him. He put Goring out of his life as completely and decisively as he had put his brother Henry years before. To the Earl Marischal he wrote complaining of Goring's imaginary breach of trust. The Earl, bitterly disgusted, wrote back pointing out with unvarnished candour that Charles's long concealment was the best proof of how those entrusted with his secrets kept them. He did not mince his words. He had heard that the Prince, infuriated by the withdrawal of supplies from England, and his English adherents' interference in the matter of Miss Walkinshaw, had retaliated by the mean threat of publishing their names. The counter-stab pierced the heart of the fallen, undone Prince, showing that under the wreckage of his life and conduct faint traces of his earlier, nobler self still existed. He answered proudly, defensively: 'You are the only friend that I know of this side of the water. My misfortunes are so great that they render me really quite incapable of supporting the impertinences of low people. My heart is broke enough without that you should finish it, your expressions are so strong without knowing where. I am obliged here to let you see clear, at least in one article. Any one whosoever that has told you I gave such a message to Ed. as you mention, has told you a damned lie (God forgive them).

I would not do the least hurt to my greatest enemy (were he in my power), much less to any one that professes to be mine.'

His heart was broken indeed, but he had still more than thirty barren years to exist before its beat was silenced.

The General Election which followed on the death of Pelham in March made some slight stir in the sluggish waters of Jacobite hopes. Charles roused himself a little, but the suggestion that he should purchase seats in the new ministry for his friends collapsed through lack of the necessary funds. The miserable *ménage* with Clementina Walkinshaw at its head, passing as the Prince's wife, bearing the numerous names which he assumed as aliases, dragged on. Her life was one long hell. She knew not when Charles might abandon her, taking the child, leaving her penniless in some foreign town. He was growing more unreasonable, more irritable and intemperate, more impossible to deal with. He did not trust her out of his sight. If she had wanted to act the spy it would have entailed endless cunning before accomplishing her purpose. She had no such ends to compass. She endured everything—blows, poverty, neglect—for sheer love of him, striving to school herself to courage and patience by clasping to her heart the image of what he had once been. She was very human, no saint, but a sorely-tried woman. Often there would be retorts, recriminations, bitter words. Usually the scene ended in bruises and curses. There was an ugly episode in a Paris tavern when they were sipping sour wine together. Charles called her a slut, which brought the blood

into her thin cheeks. She answered loudly and clearly, 'Although a Prince, you are unworthy to be called a gentleman.' Charles, infuriated, leaned over the table and struck her. The squalid scene ended in the forcible ejection of both from the house. The story was carried to the Earl Marischal. He shrugged his shoulders. He expected no better from the Prince, whom he had irrevocably broken with, despite faint efforts on Charles's part to continue on terms of friendship.

The child Charlotte, her miserable mother's one solace, was a perpetual bone of contention between the wretched parents. She learned early to be very quiet, to keep herself from sight, to do nothing to draw down on her small, luckless head the wrath of the tall, red-faced man whom she was taught to regard as her august Papa. Mama would whisper softly that Papa was a great gentleman. He was really a king, but wicked people had usurped his throne and his place. He was very unhappy because of this. Charlotte and Mama must do all they could not to add to his vexations. The child would listen and nod solemnly. Charles was fond of children. He spent his better hours in playing with the little girl, squandering money that he could ill afford on sweetmeats and playthings for her, though later he would have let her and her mother starve without raising a finger to help either. He was chiefly associated in Charlotte's shrewd, youthful mind with poor lodgings, secret visits from strange men—often shabby and ill-clad, some of whom sighed as they kissed her Papa's hand—with hurried wakings in the early dawn, and being hustled, shivering and half-dressed, by Mama, crying, into a coach, which

rattled away to an unknown destination, Papa, drinking brandy and cursing sullenly, seated opposite to them. Charlotte the nameless was a lovely flower to spring from the weeds and rubbish-heap of the ill-assorted pair's short-lived passion. Her anomalous position, childhood of poverty and seclusion, cutting her off from all companionship of her own age and status, the long, lean years spent in a convent with the forlorn Clementina, striving to obtain justice, recognition, support from her indifferent parent, might well have warped and soured her. Instead, she grew up and developed into a warm-hearted, generous-souled woman, sharing Clementina's devotion to the man who had wrecked countless lives as well as their own and his, and could mourn for nothing but his own thwarted and passionate ambition. His daughter was, perhaps, the last human being upon whom Charles expended the dregs of that fabled charm which had once brought a nation to his feet.

At Basle, after many wanderings, Charles found a temporary sanctuary. He gave out, to appease public curiosity, that he was an English physician, one Dr Thompson. He did not intend to practise. His own health needed supervision. Clementina passed as Mrs Thompson, and the incessant quarrels between this pair of sordid adventurers amused the small community which had the pleasure of constantly witnessing them. Clementina was broken in nerve, as well as in heart. Any looks that she might once have possessed were gone irrevocably. She was yellow, peevish ; her hair streaked with grey ; her figure,

still erect, shrunk to a boardlike leanness and hardness. Charles scarcely troubled to conceal his indifference towards her. At the beginning of their association he had regarded her with affection and treated her well. Now he vented his disappointments, his broken ambitions, his ill-spent life on her, as his only available victim. It never crossed his mind that she would summon up courage to do what he drove everyone to in the ultimate end, namely, to leave him.

Since his adherents in England had refused to supply more money, Charles had fallen to desperate straits. In the autumn of 1754, seeking for means to fill his empty pockets, he bethought himself of the dregs of the Loch Arkaig treasure. Cluny MacPherson and Archibald Cameron were the only two men entrusted with the secret of its burying-place, though this had leaked out, none knew how. Cameron had died a shameful death at Tyburn, but Cluny was still alive—a hunted, unpardoned fugitive, lurking in the wild, inaccessible parts of Benalder—sheltered, fed, protected by the clan which called him chief. He had been fiercely loyal to the Prince's commands to stay behind and guard the gold, at the cost of danger, loneliness, and privations. There were other things left in his charge by Charles : a diamond ring, once the property of Charles II. ; some plate, and lesser jewels. The Prince now wrote imperiously, bidding Cluny, 'as soon as he conveniently could,' to come over to Paris. He was to bring with him 'all the effects whatsoever that I left in your hands when I was in Scotland, as also whatsoever money you can come at, for I happen to be at present in great straits.' Cluny



was to go first to Waters the banker. He would direct him where to find 'his sincere friend, C.P.'

Eight years had gone by since Cluny, a ruined fugitive, had watched from the white beach of Lochnanuagh the vessel sail away bearing his Prince to France. Charles had been confident then of returning in a few months at the head of French troops, to find an army awaiting him in Scotland. The years had drifted on. Plot after plot miscarried or failed. The forlorn and attainted Cluny was conscious of his own rectitude, but in his wandering, danger-companioned days, hiding and hunted, he had been powerless to prevent the rifling of that fateful treasure or the loss of the toys entrusted to him. A short time before Charles would have stormed and blamed him. Now he was too broken, too indifferent, to question Cluny's honesty. The latter gave him an account of his stewardship. Charles nodded listlessly. 'It does not matter, *mon ami*. Does anything matter?' he asked at last.

They sat in silence, two lives broken on the wheel of fate, the thoughts of both alike straying to the country where each had first seen the other's face. Suddenly the Prince said, 'It is September. The rowans should be out in Lochaber.' He crouched a long time, staring vacantly. '*Hé*, Scotland, Scotland!' he whispered.

Money . . . money. The thought of it, the need for it, drove him to direful shifts, shameful expedients. The despised and spurned French pension once offered to him now seemed utterly desirable. He broke the silence that had reigned between him and Louis since that ignominious

expulsion from Paris by a request for money. 'If I knew a Prince more virtuous than you, to him I would appeal,' he wrote. He cloaked the demand in the poor excuse of requiring gold for his life's purpose—the regaining of the British throne—but he wanted it more terribly for the bare necessities of life: food, shelter, clothing. He had long since bargained away his available assets in the shape of jewels, arms, and finery. He was shabby, ill, miserably poor. Vaguely he besought himself of one of the women who had once courted and flattered him, though their friendship was based on intellectual interests rather than passion. The Duchesse d'Aiguillon chanced to be from home when a caller asked to see her. He was tall, ill-dressed, the marks of poverty and failure writ largely upon him, yet an intangible air of distinction pervaded him, belying his aspect of destitution. He entered with the mien of a welcome guest, rather than the suppliant for alms which his outward appearance betokened. The servants were puzzled. They gathered, finger to lip, whispering, suspicious, until his identity dawned upon them. Some had seen him in his brief time of triumph, when Paris fêted and acclaimed him. He waited for hours, but their mistress did not return—something had detained her. At five in the morning he arose, looked about him, then went, silent as he had come, leaving neither name nor message, back to his obscurity.

The Prince's affairs were stagnant, his hopes fast ebbing, his pockets empty. His own party had reluctantly grown to despair of him. He insulted by an insolent and casual reception a

second envoy sent by them to remonstrate with him about the continuance of his connection with Miss Walkinshaw. A long, pained recapitulation of his behaviour and deterioration, drawn up by Cluny MacPherson and Sir Hugh Paterson, met with a cold rejoinder. Charles wrote back that he desired to vindicate his character, which some unworthy people had had the insolence to attack, very possibly to serve some mean purpose of their own. Conscious of his conduct, he despised their low malice. He considered it beneath his dignity to treat them in the terms they merited. All but a faithful handful now turned from him.

Public events and the affairs of nations could not stand still, while the Prince's own miserable destiny was thwarted and unfertile. The outbreak of the Seven Years' War caused a glorious stirring of many waters. The face of the map of Europe seemed like to be changed. There were treaties, drawn up and disregarded, nation at the throat of nation, alarms, excursions, plotting and counter-plotting. France moved cautiously, holding out to Charles the bait of utilising his sword, long rusted from disuse. The Prince was wary. He no longer trusted a country which had once been well enough pleased to use him to further her own ends. Ministers interviewed him, politicians wooed him. He was sulky, disbelieving, non-committal. There was talk of a French expedition landing in Ireland, with the Prince at its head. Charles declined to take any such step unless the courts of Russia and Austria guaranteed the proposals made to him by France. The weeks went on, with James, to whom he was somewhat reconciled, more or less apprised of events, alter-

nately apprehensive and hopeful, the French ministry and Louis charming on the surface, the English Jacobites excited and active. But Charles had learned a bitter lesson in the past, and was reluctant to trust France. He was not altogether unwise, for France had no idea now, any more than it had had nine years ago, of making him King of Great Britain and Ireland. The French were anxious to create factions and splits in the former, and the Young Pretender might be a weapon usefully employed towards these ends, but Charles's attained ambitions, his aggrandisement, did not suit French policy. Partly comprehending as much, he refused to land in Scotland. The English Jacobites would lend no aid unless he were at the head of any invasion. The Scots, supported by Lord Elibank, declined to move if a French landing took place in Scotland and not in England. Charles enjoyed a little political importance, corresponding with various French nobles, ministers, and agents, preparing manifestos for the press, and listening graciously to the English suggestions for his Declarations. He was in Paris, living over a butcher's shop in the Rue de la Boucherie. Only at night did he dare to venture out. The star of hope burned dimly, but it was something for any star to show itself in a sky so long darkened by clouds and rain.

My Lord Clancarty was very much in this latest scheme. He hung about Dunkirk, nodding, whispering, producing mysterious letters, haunting taverns and doors of importance, his one eye seeing more than many people managed to dis-

cover with two. He boasted of his intimacy with the Prince in one breath, and abused him in the next as 'the greatest scoundrel on the face of the earth.' His spy and jackal was one Macallester, a fellow-countryman, who fanned the old flame of discord between Scots and Irish which had burned merrily all through the 'Forty-five. Charles waited, displaying a patience foreign to him. He was avid that France should employ him, but in the dark as to what she purposed and planned. He had been offered to sail with Captain Thurot, in command of a small squadron which was aimed for a landing in the Western Highlands, the while Conflans and his ships sailed to invade England, but declined. The end came on a dark October evening. Hawke scattered Conflans's tiny fleet in Quiberon Bay. The Prince read the news, scribbled in a hasty letter, his face despairing. In 1744 he had watched and waited at Gravelines, an eager boy, expecting to sail with Marshal Saxe to invasion, victory, a crown. A great tempest shattered his airy hopes, but then he was young, certain, able to plan and wait afresh. This last blow fell when he was middle-aged, soured by repeated disappointments, broken in health, damaged in reputation. He looked over the edge of an abyss, into a darkness impenetrable and obscure. Till his last hour he never ceased to hope against hope that he might be summoned to England, but his final, faint chance of such a thing perished in the waters that closed above Conflans's ill-starred ships.

Charles sunk into deeper apathy and despair for this delusive gleam of success. His bad



habits gained upon him, making him more and more impossible to handle. In 1760, after the best part of a decade spent in striving to satisfy and please him, Clementina Walkinshaw gave up the hopeless struggle. His rages were now so dangerous and uncontrolled that she had come to fear for her life. Stuart, Charles's valet, the only man whom he succeeded in keeping by his side to the very end, suspecting her purpose, ventured to dissuade her. Her black eyes, sunken and red-rimmed, flashed momentarily with their old fire. 'I would rather make away with myself than go back,' she told him.

The dour-faced Athol man used his last weapon. 'The child, madam? His Royal Highness is fond of the child,' he urged.

Clementina's face quivered, then hardened. 'I would sooner be cut in pieces than give her up,' she cried fiercely.

Stuart, following, watched her get into a coach with Charlotte, and pass from his sight for ever. This last desertion completed the ruin of Charles's drink-darkened mind. His semi-reconciliations with Louis and his father were merged in renewed quarrelling. James, for public edification, gave out that Miss Walkinshaw, with his full approval, had withdrawn to a convent, taking her daughter with her for purposes of the latter's education. The bruises on Clementina's lean arms might have told a different tale, but she was proudly silent on the subject of her treatment by Charles. James, financially and morally, supported his unwanted grandchild and her unhappy mother, an action sanctioned by Louis, who declined to aid Charles in regaining possession of his daughter.

Clementina might go. Charles was not sorry to be quit of her without taking a step himself that his adherents had long urged, but Charlotte was a different matter. 'I shall be in ye greatest affliction untill I guett back ye child, which was my only comfort in my misfortunes,' he declared in a frantic, ill-spelt letter. But the convent-door barred him from his daughter, and rightly. He broke off all relations with France on this pretext, and remained 'intractable,' as someone reported, at Bouillon. Later, he quarrelled with and dismissed Murray of Elibank, who had been loyal throughout, on a groundless suspicion of his being concerned in, and privy to, Clementina's flight. There never was a baser charge, but Murray's reproaches, though less bluntly put than Goring's, were sadly true and deserved. 'When I have the honour of being with you I am miserable,' Murray wrote, 'seeing you take so little care of a health which is so precious to every honest man, but more so to me in particular, because I know you, and therefore can't help loving, honouring, and esteeming you, but your Royal Highness is resolved to destroy yourself to all intents and purposes. Everybody here talks of your conduct with horror, and from being once the admiration of Europe, you are become the reverse. Think what cruel anguish these reports give to me, and the few here that are truly attached to you.' Charles was past caring. Miss Walkinshaw's pitiful letter, striving to explain to her 'dearest Prince' that she had only left him because his brutal ill-treatment drove her to it in order to save her life, met with no reply. He refused to go to Rome, despite James's pleading letters, enclosing money to meet the expenses

of the journey. Charles kept the money, but never went. A stiff letter, dictated to a secretary and written in the third person, was his answer to Henry's appeal that their long estrangement might be healed. James's failing health made it more than likely that in a short time Charles would succeed to the barren honours and rank of 'old Mr Melancholy,' as the Whigs mockingly styled his grave father. Some dregs of shame yet remained in the ruined nature. It were better that James should remember his Carluccio as he last saw him, eager-eyed, radiant with hope and youth, slipping out of Rome on his way to a throne, as both had fondly foreseen. The proud head drooped when Charles recalled his boastful promise. 'I go, sire, in search of three crowns, which I hope to have the honour and happiness of laying at your Majesty's feet.' How differently from his anticipations had matters fallen out, how scurvily had fate treated him. Project after project had crumbled to dust. Plot after plot had been shattered in the making. He had lived to drive from him his mistresses, his child, his most faithful friends. Morison, Daniel, and the Scottish servants who had been with him through his campaign and his wanderings he had turned adrift, penniless, in a foreign land. Only in a few Scottish hearts was his image still mirrored, untarnished and undimmed. He looked into the empty future, and wished with tired bitterness that he had perished amongst the others whom Cumberland's brutal soldiery had left lifeless, wounded, dying, on the sodden battle-ground of Drum Mossie so many years before.



BOOK III.  
THE BROKEN HEART



‘God knows my heart is broke enough without  
that you should finish it.’

*Prince Charles to the Earl Marischal.*

## CHAPTER I.

'I take my heart in my hand,  
O my God, O my God,  
My broken heart in my hand :  
Thou hast seen, judge Thou.  
My hope was written on sand,  
O my God, O my God :  
Now let Thy judgment stand—  
Yea, judge me now.'

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

THE room, a sombre apartment of a London house, situated in a part of the city where respectability struggled to hold its head above the waters of encroaching poverty, was very quiet. Little traffic went past, and few pedestrians. The man who sat within at a table, writing amidst a confusion of papers, was not much past fifty, precise in dress and figure, sallow as to complexion, with a curious shiftiness in expression, a glancing aside from the face of interrogator or companion, that betokened one long ashamed to look his fellows in the face. There were traces about the room of a woman's presence—some unfinished needlework, a piece of half-copied music, a delicate glove; but the only other occupant was a child some nine years of age. He was playing by himself in a corner, unnoticed by his father. When the front-door bell jangled he slipped behind a tall screen.

The man rose from his writing. He turned uncertainly to the mass of papers, shuffled a few

out of sight, and stood expectant. A glance through the window showed no vehicle waiting in the street. His visitor must have come on foot—a rash proceeding—unaccompanied, unescorted. The other's sallow face flushed. Memories rose before him, drawing tears to eyes long unaccustomed to weep for any but his lost self. The steep streets of frowning Edinburgh stood up, shrouded in a mist that blurred her tall houses and lean wynds. The low-lying palace brooded behind open gates, from out of which, in the midst of a gallant escort, there rode a figure on a bay horse. The crowd stared, none cheered, but the rider carried his head proudly, as if uncaring. The scene faded. The two were in a room together, the younger man scribbling his signature at the foot of documents drawn up by the elder. He could see the flushed cheek bent over the paper, the tip of a red tongue protruding from a parted mouth. During his bitter examination in the Tower he had made the admission that he had often seen the Pretender's son write. What memories, what quaint little episodes, what tender, quizzical thoughts that bare sentence evoked. Charles, calling imperiously to be told how to spell a word; Charles, contemplating in calm impenitence an overturned ink-horn, the dark contents meandering amongst Murray's impeccable papers; Charles, chattering excitedly, confident of all he meant to do. The watcher fought back his emotion. The door had opened, and a figure was being ushered in by the slatternly maid-servant.

The two men looked at one another across the gulf of nearly twenty years.

How much had passed since then? They had parted virtually when Murray, stricken down by illness at Inverness, had tendered his resignation as secretary. The Prince had occasionally seen him, sick, shattered, negligible, in the dark days before Culloden; but Murray had faded from councils and importance when his office was given to the incompetent Hay. Charles had heard later of Murray's furtive flight half across Scotland, ending in arrest at Polmood, and a lodging in Edinburgh Castle. For long he had refused to believe in Murray's treachery. In the midst of his own absorbing and involved affairs throughout the autumn of 1746, he had besieged D'Argenson on behalf of Murray and his fellow-prisoners in the Tower—Sir Hector Maclean and young Glen-garry. All three held French commissions, and to secure their exchange would, the Prince assured the indifferent minister, personally oblige him. Charles had trusted Murray, nay, loved him. Long after he knew him as he was some dim sympathy linked them, for had not Charles deserted his post as much as Murray? Then came the trial of Lord Lovat, Murray's evidence, bringing that hoary head to the block, imperilling innumerable lesser necks and reputations. Murray, subsequently pardoned and subsidised by the Government, disappeared into the obscurity that had concealed him for years from his former fellows. He was held up to public and general execration as a traitor. Mr 'Evidence' Murray was a name at which Jacobite lips spat. The upright old Edinburgh lawyer who grimly arranged the details for the sale of Broughton, smashed the tea-cup out of which Murray had drunk. The action was sym-

bolical of the contempt, the estimation in which all honest men held Prince Charles Edward's one-time secretary.

Mr Murray stared appalled at the transformation of his former master. Charles was still stately and tall. Nothing could rob him of a certain grace, an air, an unconscious arrogance which called up faint memories of what he had once been ; but he was no more the slight figure, regal and gracious, of Murray's dreams than Murray, lean, stooped, a withered stick of a middle-aged man, resembled the slim, sallow, efficient secretary whom Charles had found so invaluable. A gesture of his hand forbade any act of homage. He sat down, curtly motioning to Murray to do the same. He spoke, his tone haughty, impersonal. 'You received my letter?'

Murray bowed. 'I was honoured by it, sir.'

The Prince's red face hardened. 'Oh, you need not imagine that you have rehabilitated yourself in my eyes. I could never employ you again.' He saw Murray shrink and wince, but it did not move him. 'I require certain information.' He talked curtly. 'It is a matter on which it might be unwise to have a correspondence. A personal interview was necessary, but you must not call it an audience. Your friends are not to think that I received you.'

Murray sat with bowed head. His world deemed that he was given his punishment years before. It seemed to the man's shrunken soul as if it had been reserved for him until now.

Charles's fingers drummed on the table. 'I refer to the Loch Arkaig treasure,' he explained.

Streaks of red appeared on Murray's parchment



cheeks. 'I understood that much of it had been stolen by certain of the clans, sir.'

'I daresay. I daresay.' Charles bit his lip. 'Yet there must be some left,' he persisted.

Murray cast a hunted glance around. 'Dr Cameron was entrusted with the secret of its burial, sir,' he whispered.

'Cameron is dead. He suffered at Tyburn.' Charles stared into space. 'Cluny, who also knew it, is dead too. He swore on his death-bed that he was innocent of taking any share himself of the gold. I believed him, but——' Their eyes met across the narrow, untidy table.

'I had none of it, sir.' Murray spoke quietly. He remembered the Prince's temper of old. Charles had never brooked argument.

The brown eyes smouldered sullenly. Murray was reminded horribly of a fire smoking and licking its way amongst damp, dead leaves. A touch, a stir, and they would burst into flame. . . .

'I took possession of the six casks, sir, landed from the French ships, and Dr Cameron carried the money in bags to Loch Arkaig.'

Charles said again: 'Cameron is dead.'

They were both silent, the Prince recalling that wet autumn night when he had gone with Archibald Cameron and Cluny, to show the latter the spot where tongueless earth hid the secret of those bags of gold. The loch was dark in the sharp moonlight, a little wind whispering in and out of a fringe of tall reeds. The slight rain, sweet-scented, was blown against their faces. They had heard owls calling, thin, mocking. He could have staked his life on the honesty of the two who walked with him.

‘The gold should have amounted nearly to thirty thousand pounds.’ Suddenly the Prince gave a cackling laugh. ‘A coincidence, eh, *mon ami*? The price upon my head was thirty thousand. If you were thinking to play the traitor, you had better have sold me than poor Lord Lovat. The Government were not so generous to you as if you had betrayed your Prince. You might have been lapped in luxury, whereas——’ His scornful glance seemed to shrivel the mean room.

Murray muttered, with hanging head: ‘I had sooner died at Tyburn, sir, than sell my master, though I can scarce expect your Royal Highness to credit that I speak the truth. For nearly twenty years I have not gone about in daylight, able to look my fellows in the face——’

‘Eh, we are both hunted rats.’ The Prince shrugged his shoulders. ‘I too know what it is to skulk and hide, and long for night-time that I may breathe a little fresh air without discovery.’ He sat silent, vacant-eyed. Abruptly he then asked: ‘Have you no papers or accounts to show me?’

Murray scrambled hurriedly and nervously amongst the litter strewing the table. Charles’s face softened involuntarily, momentarily, at the sight of the account which Murray presented, drawn up with the ex-secretary’s old meticulous neatness, but a frown succeeded as he scanned the various items. He muttered over them, his brows drawn. ‘“Received from Sir Thomas Sheridan in the wood upon the side of Loch Arkaig, opposite to a place called Callich, about ten days after the battle of Culloden, 1000

guineas." How did Sheridan come by that?' he questioned sharply.

'He did not say, sir. He stated that it might be of more service to your Royal Highness if left in my hands, than if he conveyed it with him to France.'

Charles crumpled the papers impatiently. "Six casks of French gold landed at Borradaile, containing 35,000 *louis d'or*." H'm. Now, I see, come your discharges.'

'Yes, sir.' Murray was faintly eager to vindicate his honesty. 'Your Royal Highness will see that some five hundred guineas was given out by me to Clanranald, Ardshiel, Cameron of Torcastle, Dr Cameron, my clerk Stewart, for the support of the wounded and the widows of those who died at Culloden.'

'How was it distributed?'

'It was agreed, sir, to give half a guinea to the former and a guinea to each of the latter.'

'Go on.'

'At the meeting at Callich, sir, where it was proposed to continue the war, to enable the several commanders to make their complements there was distributed among them six hundred *louis d'or*, valued as guineas.' He added faintly: 'I thought it unreasonable that the *louis* should be given at the value of twenty shillings as formerly. I paid away about two thousand, two hundred and fifty of them as guineas.'

'Did you give money to Lochiel? Yes, I see you did.'

'Yes, sir, forty pounds in Spanish gold.' Murray smiled weakly. 'What makes me remember it the better was my chiding him

for being too easy to give money to whoever asked it. He told me then that he had not one farthing left, having given all among his own people about. He was on horseback, ready to set out——'

Charles interrupted harshly, banishing the picture of the proscribed Cameron chief, lame and penniless, starting forlornly for some unknown lurking-place. 'These are small matters. It was very right to give such necessary sums to relieve any in want, but I must know the disposition and fate of the French gold.'

Murray licked his pale lips. 'The sum, sir, fifteen thousand *louis d'or*, a thousand in each bag, was counted over exactly, and divided into three parcels, with five thousand in each. We put one under a rock in a small rivulet, and dug holes in the ground near for the other two, which we deposited——'

The Prince broke in again. 'Who were "we"?'

'Dr Archibald Cameron, sir, young MacLeod of Neuck, Sir Stewart Thriepland, and Major Kennedy.'

The Prince nodded. 'Well, and what became of the remaining gold? My eyes are not what they were, and I cannot read your figures.' He tossed the papers aside.

'Another sum, sir, of twelve thousand pounds, in two parcels, six thousand in each, was conveyed by Dr Cameron and Mr Alexander MacLeod from Achnacarry the night before we were obliged to retire from there. They carried it upon their shoulders, and buried it near the foot of Loch Arkaig, about a mile beyond Achnacarry. We

only reserved five thousand for necessary expenses.'

'Ah! Your own?'

'They were not heavy, sir. I bought a horse for five guineas from a gentleman in Balquhiddy, and there was a trifle to a man who recovered a pocket-book which I had dropped in the wood of Ballachulish. I also bought whisky and snuff for Lochiel, and—and'—his voice was faint, shamed—'a fair wig and other things to disguise myself when I went south.'

Charles, whose own false noses, abbé's gowns, blackened eyebrows, and various methods of changing an appearance far more distinguished and well-known than Mr Murray's had successfully deceived everybody for years, smiled contemptuously. He had scant pity for Murray's misfortunes, and was only here to wring from him the particulars concerning the fated Loch Arkaig treasure and its disposal. He said coldly: 'I sent a message to Lochiel, acquainting him that I was in the Isle of Uist, unable to procure a vessel, and desiring to know if he could provide one upon the coast. I also demanded a supply of money. Why did you not attend to my necessity? You had the means.'

Murray's hands twisted. 'I had none amongst with me, sir, save a little for common necessities on the road. I understood that your Royal Highness had carried above a thousand guineas with you when you went to the Isles, and as you had been but a short time away, it was not natural to imagine that you could have so soon expended it.'

'*Mon Dieu!* and am I answerable to *you* for my expenditure?' Charles's face blazed.



‘There was nothing in writing, sir, to show that these gentlemen and the demand came from your Royal Highness. I was uncertain how far they really got orders to make it. They also told me that you might be gone from the island before their return, for when they were coming away there was a meal-ship on the coast which Boisdale was endeavouring to engage to carry off your Royal Highness.

‘If you had five thousand pounds, you were in a position to supply me.’ Charles still looked very angry.

‘Lochiel was given fifteen hundred *louis d’or*, sir, to supply your Royal Highness, in case you returned to the mainland.’

Charles had never been a swift reader of character, or a shrewd taster of men. He sat, hard put to it to tell whether Murray were lying, ready to ignore the disposal of smaller sums, but avid for the plundered and purloined French treasure. Young Glengarry, accused of fingering it, was dead. Dr Cameron, similarly charged, had left his widow and family in the direst need. If a thief, what had he done with the money? Individual clansmen who had pocketed a share could not be marked down and made disgorge. Cluny’s dying words were a denial of having touched a solitary *louis d’or* himself. The gold, which had caused confusion, bitterness, blackmail, treachery, and brought good to none, was scattered, stolen, or so safely bestowed that none could now locate it. Charles rose, his brow lowering.

‘Would that the ships had never landed those casks of gold.’ His hands clenched. ‘Well, I see that I have come here on a gowk’s errand,

as your countrymen would say.' He moved to the door, a strangely stately figure. 'Fare you well,' he said coldly.

Murray stumbled after him into the dark hall. 'Is it safe or wise for your Royal Highness to go on foot, and to walk about so openly, sir?' he gasped.

The Prince shrugged his shoulders. 'I have carried my life in my hand too often and too long to turn my head for every footstep.' His tone was sad, yet careless. 'Sometimes I should be thankful if my enemies tracked and took me.' He stood a moment in the narrow passage, sour with the odours of poverty and mean cooking. A faint memory took him by the throat. 'What of your wife, Murray?' he asked suddenly.

Murray mumbled that he had married again, a young Quaker lady.

Before the Prince's eyes there rose up the glowing, passionate face of the first Mrs Murray of Broughton, the beauty whom the Jacobites used to toast. She had sat on horseback, tossing white cockades amongst the cheering crowds the day that he had entered Edinburgh. He dared not ask what had befallen her. She had been near to childbirth that disastrous April which saw Culloden. He demanded abruptly: 'Have you children?'

'Yes, sir.'

Charles's haughty face darkened. 'You are more fortunate than I. I had one daughter, but my enemies stole her from me.' He stood brooding sullenly over his wrongs. 'Farewell,' he said again, abruptly.

Murray fell to his knees. Crawling after the Prince, he kissed the hem of the loose, shabby

cloak. Charles disengaged it roughly from the clutch of the clammy fingers. It was perhaps the bitterest moment of the many bitter ones in Murray's mean, unsuccessful life.

The door slammed loudly in the street. The Prince's footfalls, dragging, heavy, ceased. Murray remembered how he used to thrill at the approach of Charles's quick, light tread. He went back into the dismal room, to find his little boy standing, wide-eyed, in the middle of the floor. 'Papa, who was the cross gentleman with the red face?' he inquired breathlessly.

Murray started. He had overlooked the child's presence. 'Were you there, imp? Well, when you are a man, Charles, remember that you have seen your King.'

The January winds, blowing down from snow-covered mountains, were keen and sharp-toothed. So, at any rate, decided one shivering, middle-aged gentleman, stamping up and down beside the coach which had conveyed him two posts beyond Florence, as he vainly endeavoured to keep some semblance of life in his quaking frame. It was barely daybreak—cold, grey, mournful. He was apprehensive as well as physically chilled. The first interview with the person whom he had been dispatched to meet between Florence and Bologna was heavy upon him.

Mr Andrew Lumisden, secretary to His late Majesty, King James III. and VIII., had cheerfully risked and lost his all for the Stuarts. He was only in his twenties at the time of the Rising, and unlike so many sons whose fathers turned a blind eye on their offsprings' proceedings when

sundry young men 'came out,' Mr Lumisden's male parent acted the Spartan. Arrived in safety on French soil, young Lumisden had undergone a terrible time of privation—one of the many whom the Prince's folly and petulance towards France put it out of his power to aid. Eventually Lumisden found his way to Rome and an anchorage. King James made him his under-secretary, to relieve the harassed and over-conscientious Edgar of some of his multifarious duties. Lumisden's youthful figure was swallowed up by the shadows of the sad semi-state which surrounded the aging, anxious James and his elderly entourage. He became merged in a life which only touched the fringe of the activities, political and otherwise, of the world outside. The bright-haired Charles was the sole link with more stirring happenings, but as the years went on Charles, too, passed from the ken and hearing of any in the Palace of the Apostles. Lumisden performed his duties to admiration. He was liked and esteemed by James to the extent of succeeding Edgar, when Death, the only one who could have severed the King and his faithful servant, stepped between them. Edgar's death was followed by that of James himself. One dark New Year's morning he slipped peacefully away into a world that had long been nearer and more real to him than the things of earth. He was laid to rest with all the pomp that his rank and his Church could devise, but had been denied the one gift for which he craved—a sight of his 'dearest Carluccio's' face. His younger son, dutiful, priestly, had never failed him, save for one minor disagreement, of which details and origin

are both obscure. Henry had been the best of sons, Charles the very worst. It was the old tale of the prodigal over again, without the happy ending. James waited and watched for Charles, but Charles never came. He had only bestirred himself to travel to Rome when James was dying, urged by God knows what suspicions and fears of those around James. He did not trust Henry, who acted towards him with unbounded generosity. Henry might seize jewels and money for the Church that were rightfully the elder son's. Henry had no intention of doing any such thing. He was grief-stricken for the loss of his father, and acutely apprehensive as to the garb and condition in which Charles might reappear to claim James's empty honours. Would he be sober and decently dressed? Might not some lady, whose position was most irregular, accompany him? Henry besieged the Pope and his Maker impartially on the distressing subject. Charles's situation was of extreme delicacy. He had left the Roman Catholic Church to join the Church of England, and now apparently belonged to neither. Could this poor grey sheep not be shepherded gently back into the true fold ere too late? In the meantime, Charles was returning to Rome after adventures, excitements, and irregularities, the mere thought of which caused the good Cardinal to cross himself. The new King must be met and escorted in suitable state to the dark and sombre palace. Lumisden, who had acted as his secretary during the unfortunate campaign of 1745, was approached. Would he greatly oblige His Royal Highness by meeting His Majesty on his journey to Rome?



Lumisden bowed acquiescence. He had driven from the Eternal City, faintly thrilled by the prospect of seeing once more the idolised Prince of the 'Forty-five. Nearly twenty years had gone by since they had last beheld each other's faces. April of this new year would see the twentieth anniversary of Culloden. Everywhere events and personalities were changing. George III. reigned in Great Britain, more English than the English themselves. The sons of men like Lord Lovat, Lochgarry, Lord George Murray were proud of commissions in the British army. Their swords would never be drawn for the White Rose. Jacobitism was an auld sang. Charles lived in the memories, the hopes, the prayers of a faithful few, but his Cause was dead as a last year's nest. He could never be brought to see it; and a certain curiosity as to his movements still stirred amongst British diplomatists. He was watched, smiled at, his actions recorded in letters home, but he himself had ceased politically to be important or dangerous. 'The Young Pretender' was a past menace.

Time had dealt gently with Lumisden. He had grown thin, precise, ultra neat as to wig and dress—a kindly, dry stick, whose outside interests were limited to a mild dabbling in Roman antiquities and the affairs of his sister, Lady Strange, her famous husband, and her growing family. She fed the flames of his lukewarm Jacobitism (Lumisden was loyal, but never enthusiastic) by her fierce partisanship. To her Charles was never the reckless adventurer whose Cause had ruined her brother's life and long endangered her husband's. The spiteful inven-

tions of his enemies were responsible for the exaggerated stories of his irregular life and intemperate habits. 'I will not hear a word against my darling,' the devoted, foolish woman would cry. The thought of his sister involuntarily crossed Lumisden's mind as a coach rolled up and a figure stood framed in the doorway. He hurried forward, and knelt in the snow to receive King Charles the Third.

'*Peste!* How cold it is!' The voice, once high, imperious, ringing, was now querulous, thickened, peevish. Charles stepped down heavily. 'Have you been presented to me, sir?' he demanded.

'I had the honour of serving your Majesty when Prince of Wales, sir. It was during your campaign in Scotland. My name is Lumisden——'

'O lud, of course! You fill the good Edgar's post.' Charles embraced the lean figure. 'Come, let us start,' he ordered imperiously. 'You will ride with me, *mon ami*. Your chaise can follow with Mr Urquhart.' He ruthlessly dislodged the latter, who obeyed, shivering.

Lumisden, seated nervously opposite to the new King, ventured a timid inquiry as to His Majesty's health. Charles retorted carelessly that it was perfect. 'Except for my feet and legs. They are much swollen with fatigue, by the haste I made.'

'I trust that your Majesty enjoyed a good journey?'

'Tolerable. I had a miraculous escape. My coach was overturned on a precipice near Bologna.' He stared into space. Lumisden caught the muttered words: 'Once I should have thought it was for some great end.'

Lumisden broke the dismal pause. 'I have the honour to bear a letter to your Majesty, from the Cardinal, sir.'

Charles's face softened. The secretary caught a fugitive glimpse of the old Charles, the old charm. His pulses quickened. 'Give it to me.' It was handed over with profound respect. Charles read it eagerly. 'Is my brother well? I trust so? I wish we could make faster progress. I long to embrace him.'

Lumisden reassured him as to Henry's welfare. His Royal Highness's constitution was naturally somewhat impaired by his grief for his father and his incessant labours undertaken on behalf of his brother. Charles, frowning, demanded an explanation. Lumisden diffidently explained that there were difficulties in the way of Charles being acknowledged king and received on his return to Rome with the royal honours enjoyed by his father. The Duke had violated his natural feelings in seeking an audience of the Pope ere King James was even buried, to lay in the strongest possible terms Charles's case before the Holy Father. He had written to the courts of France and Spain on the same subject, leaving no stone unturned . . .

Charles interrupted harshly, angrily. 'I am much surprised that the Pope and his ministers should have any difficulty in immediately acknowledging my titles, after the strong invitation I had to return to Rome. However, till I have seen my brother, I will take no resolutions.'

Lumisden breathed a sigh of relief. He was beginning to foresee infinite complications, and his own release, which he had long hoped for upon

James's death, indefinitely postponed. Charles decided that they should halt for the night at San Quirico, from whence Lumisden could dispatch a courier to the Cardinal, announcing His Majesty's expectation of reaching Rome two nights afterwards, between ten and eleven o'clock. 'I beg that supper may be ready for me, as I do not propose to dine by the way. There must be a bed in my apartment for Stuart, and beds somewhere else for two of my domestics, besides beds for three gentlemen and a servant that attends Mr Hay. The Cardinal may send a coach to take me up at Ponte Molle, but I absolutely desire that His Royal Highness should not come out to meet me at so late an hour.'

They spent a comfortless night at San Quirico, Lumisden sitting up with numbed fingers to overtake his arrears of correspondence; Charles, cold, fretful, complaining; his suite quarrelsome and cross. Next day they travelled rapidly, despite bad roads coated with ice and snow, and halted for the second night at Montefiascone. It was the scene of James Stuart's marriage to Clementina Sobieski forty-six years before. Lumisden wondered if their son knew, remembered, or cared.

The secretary was steeling himself to loyalty. He had loved James, and it was hard to look at the gross figure lolling opposite, while the heavy vehicle jolted through the wintry country in the growing daylight, and reconcile it with the slim Prince of Lumisden's memory and James's dreams. How many times had the good King looked longingly and in vain for a courier bearing the news of his son's arrival. 'There is no danger, Lumisden. He can safely visit Rome,' James

would say. And now the King was dead and buried, and Charles III. reigned in his stead. He had come home at last to—what? A meagre court, empty pomp, his father's barren honours grudged and withheld by Papal authority, uncertainty as to money, a future as dark as the mournful palace of his chilled boyhood. They were both silent as the coach rocked and swung forward on its journey. Lumisden wondered what thoughts were in the King's mind. Twenty-two years had elapsed since his stealthy departure, beckoned by the lure of a throne, from the Eternal City. He had known triumph, adventure, danger, victory, sore defeat. For six weeks he had reigned, an uncrowned king, in Holyrood. For months he had hidden and lurked amongst a people whose devotion was as steadfast as their tall mountains. He had dashed into the heart of England at the head of his Highlanders, shaking the foundations of the Hanoverian dynasty, and setting London itself aquake. He had perplexed politicians, rulers, closest friends by his disguises and journeyings. He had plotted and schemed and intrigued to regain the crown of his ancestors. How had it all ended—triumph, failure, morbid policy, and petty puzzlement? He was returned, lonely, discredited, exiled, to a home that was no home, a court of shadows and sad memories; a life soured at the source and drab in the finish. Lumisden was glad that they would enter Rome after darkness fell, cloaking the familiar scenes from view. What thoughts, what memories, what pain must they not evoke?

The gaunt palace waited, its prevailing gloom overshadowing the mellow flare of many candles.



Charles stiffly, slowly left the coach and climbed the marble steps. He stood a moment, seeing the Charles of that bitter January morning running down them, mounting his horse, and galloping off without a backward glance. He had been so young, so confident, so certain. Henry was not in his great secret . . .

‘His Royal Highness the Cardinal-Duke, sir.’ He started at Lumisden’s discreet murmur by his elbow. A tall, thin ecclesiastic had hurried forward.

‘Carluccio!’

‘Henry!’

‘Your Majesty must be very cold.’

‘Yes. We could not drive quickly, as the roads were covered with ice. I think it will snow again before morning.’

‘Indeed? indeed?’

This was all their greeting to one another, everything they could find to say to one another, after nineteen years.

‘I have given directions for the Queen’s apartment to be prepared for your Majesty.’

The changed, heavy face lightened a little. ‘I thank you.’

They supped together in a ghostly room, a few soft-footed servants waiting on them. The place was full of shades. James, Sheridan, Edgar, the boy Charles, the child Henry kept them bloodless company; while memory, remorse, futile longings, dead hopes seasoned the strange fare. They spoke a little of James. Henry was resolved to benefit in no way by his father’s death or dispositions. It was not known as yet whether the Pope would continue James’s pension to his elder son.

‘I shall claim it.’ Charles’s eyes smouldered. ‘It is my right. If I am to be received in Rome, it must be as King.’

He slept—or did not sleep—that night in the high-ceilinged, dismal chamber where poor Clementina Sobieski, having borne two children and endured much disappointment, thankfully gave up her unsatisfied, frustrated life. She had bequeathed to him her high spirit, her soaring ambition—and what had either availed him? His hopes had long fallen to dead ashes. Pride had died, as the new struggle, ignoble and futile, to establish himself as King in the eyes of Rome was shortly to show. Bitter winds had blown upon the White Rose, withering and scattering all but the last petals.

## CHAPTER II.

‘Say the Prince,  
As I may well believe, seems vicious,  
Who justly knows ’tis not to try our honours?  
Or, say he be an ill Prince, are we therefore  
Fit fires to purge him? . . .  
Our honest actions, and the light that breaks  
Like morning from our service, chaste and blushing,  
Is that that pulls a prince back ; then he sees  
And not till then truly repents his errors,  
When subjects’ crystal souls are glasses to him.’

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

FOR many years past King James, that stooped, gaunt, melancholy figure, had made few appearances in public. During his last decade he had withdrawn more and more into the seclusion of his own apartments, even to the extent of taking his meals alone. Latterly he had subsided into bed, and lain there, his sole link with the outer world being his younger son, known as the Cardinal of York. The latter was a familiar sight to many Roman citizens, friendly with his brother-cardinals, on affectionately close terms with the Pope, but save that he was oftener seen abroad than his father, he was as little known as James to Roman society. Henry was extremely musical, devoting much of his time to the performance of oratorios of his own composition. He liked a fine equipage, a good table, a certain state and ceremony as commensurate with his worldly and ecclesiastical rank,

but he was neither ostentatious nor extravagant. He had none of poor Charles's consuming ambition for a crown.

His brother's return plunged Henry straight-way into a heady sea of difficulties. The Pope was aloof and unfriendly. Charles's desertion of the Church of Rome rankled. A confessed Protestant, he now returned to the Papal city, where his position was ambiguous and undignified, bringing with him a murky and discreditable record. Henry strove to smooth his brother's path as far as lay in his power. He declined to benefit in any way by the provisions of James's will. His pension of ten thousand crowns a year from the Pope had been settled on Henry after James's death. Henry decided to give this unreservedly to Charles, in addition to the late King's savings of the previous year, all of which had been willed to him by James. Charles accepted everything without gratitude or scruple. When he accompanied Henry for dreary drives, during which there was nothing to talk about lest Charles should be bored and Henry scandalised, the elder brother occupied the seat of honour in the carriage, the place reserved for a reigning sovereign. It was in vain that Henry strove to ameliorate Charles's dismal lot by attentions such as these. The Pope acquiesced in the arrangement about the elder Stuart's pension, but refused to recognise Charles as King, to grant him the hollow honours enjoyed by his father. He dragged out the long, futile days in the empty, echoing palace, with no visitors from the outside world save his brother, or the Pope's emissaries, whom he received in a parade of royal state.

For his sole companions he had Stafford—rescued from oblivion at Avignon—Urquhart, a Scots officer in French service, and Charles's former secretaries, Lumisden, and Hay of Restalrig. Charles was faced with all the minor annoyances of a king, without enjoying one of the satisfactions. Lord Elcho reappeared, to sue for his long-unpaid fifteen hundred guineas. Charles took refuge in ignoring alike the demand and the claimant. He had grown careful, whereupon his enemies styled him stingy. Besides Elcho's, he received other disagreeable reminders of his monetary obligations, debts of honour, if not disbursements in hard cash. A stony silence answered all these appeals. In dismal letters to Walsh, whose vessel had carried him to Scotland in the year of fate, he lamented that 'my disagreeable situation at Rome continues the same.' Small slights, mostly imaginary, infuriated him. He wrote incoherently of the author of a letter who in it incautiously addressed him as Royal Highness. 'He certainly should have known long ago the change in my state. Until he writes me properly, I cannot think of answering his letter.' He grumbled that he could hardly maintain the very few gentlemen he had about him. The courts of France and Spain were solicited, as in 1746, for monetary aid. Sometimes he even regretted the wild days of lurking and danger, in comparison with this stagnant existence of pretentious state and hollow grandeur.

He had no intellectual interests. The days of dabbling in the doctrines of *les Philosophes*, and of reading Machiavelli or Fielding, were long gone by. He indulged in a little shooting, which



made some improvement in his health and spirits, but it was not permanent. Lumisden wrote that he charmed everyone ; only few were thus tested. How could English tourists or Roman grandees cross the threshold of that frowning palace, not knowing how to address the much-discussed occupant ?

Charles oscillated between Albano and Rome, but declared that, deprived of all society, it was the same to him which place he was in. 'I am like one on ship-board ; I converse only with my own little crew,' he explained. The situation bore hardly on the members of the said crew. Charles was a strict taskmaster. The uttermost farthing in ceremonial and attendance was to be extracted from those unluckily obliged, for considerations of livelihood, to stay with him. Lumisden's loyalty and endurance were strained to breaking-point. From morning till midnight he was compelled to remain in Charles's uncongenial company, too harassed and fatigued to read a book, unable to seek the solitude of his own chamber save to write or sleep. His secretary's duties were overwhelming. It fell to his lot to answer courteously and tactfully the host of appeals for money with which needy adherents and distressed exiles bombarded the new king. Many a time Lumisden preferred to dip into his own ill-lined pocket sooner than show a letter to Charles and receive his curt refusal to aid the writer. Clementina Walkinshaw begged for countenance and support. Lumisden was compelled to tell her that Charles never mentioned her name, and he dared not introduce it.

Meals were lengthy, tedious, spun-out to fill up

the empty, idle hours. Every afternoon a solemn and absurd procession went through the streets of Rome. Charles and Hay occupied one coach, Lumisden, Urquhart, and Stafford followed in a second. Charles reckoned two coaches necessary for his decorum. It was useless to plead illness or excess of business. There was no escape for any one of them. The trio in the coach behind could recoup their exhausted minds and bodies by lounging in silence, but Hay had to be alert, respectful, ready with tactful comment and answer to Charles's grumbles or remarks. No one took the slightest notice of the cavalcade. The returned coaches drew up before the sombre palace, disgorging their dissatisfied occupants. Charles was escorted indoors with extreme ceremony. Another endless evening followed, the prelude to another endless day. Charles would sit, moody and discontented, in his private apartment, the patient Lumisden in attendance, chafing inwardly, outwardly deferential and delighted. There were ugly scenes, whispers of which reached Rome through the gossip of Urquhart, who drank tea one day with my Lord Elcho. He was still lingering in the Italian capital, obstinately hopeful of his success in inducing the Pope to act as mediator between himself and Charles in the matter of that rankling fifteen hundred guineas. Urquhart reported that the stories of the King's intemperate habits were not exaggerations. He was very quarrelsome in his cups, not infrequently violent. Mr Hay that afternoon had escaped from the usual purgatorial drive on the plea of a black eye rendering it inadvisable that he should show himself in public. It was given out that he

had fallen over a chair in the dark, but—‘*Enfin*, we have all felt the weight of His Majesty’s fist,’ sneered the disloyal equerry.

Death released Stafford from his long bondage to the House of Stuart in 1768. In December of the same year Lumisden, Hay, and Urquhart found themselves summarily dismissed. Charles had grown so long accustomed to treat harshly and arbitrarily those who served him that when they retaliated he was surprised and furious. The short day was dun-coloured, heavy with brooding snow. At dinner Charles announced it his pleasure to attend an oratorio in the afternoon. Music and sport were the sole diversions left to him. His gentlemen looked uneasily at one another. The King was in no condition to go abroad. Lumisden murmured as much. Charles, his face purple, stormed that he intended to go. The coaches were ordered. He lurched down the steps and stumbled into his. The three followed him and spoke their minds. It was not for His Majesty’s honour and dignity that he should be seen in public as he was. With all respect, they begged to be excused from attending him.

They were inflexible in their decision not to enter the waiting vehicles. Charles had no alternative but to return to the palace. He addressed them curtly: ‘Very good, then, gentlemen. You are dismissed. I will employ no disobedient servants.’ They bowed and withdrew. Mingled with their humiliation and natural resentment at the ingratitude meted out to years of loyal service, was an enormous relief. The Cardinal approved their action and facilitated their departures. By

his intervention Charles had had a private audience of the Pope, and was more or less reconciled to the Church of Rome. His dismissed suite were all Protestants. Henry was not sorry to remove the last of those who had known Charles in his happier days, and to substitute Catholics and Italians. Charles, as Lumisden later wrote to Hay, 'would always be served in his own manner.' His anger cooled, he had sent the three curt word to return to their duties, but made no attempt to retain or recall them when met with dignified refusals.

The palace felt emptier and sadder. He sat alone, pondering over his failures. It never entered his mind that they were his own fault. Always he had been pursued by a vague, malignant fate. The entrance of his valet, Stuart, the last relic of 1745, disturbed him. The man, a stern Scot, was weeping. The Cardinal wished him to leave also. He awaited His Majesty's decision.

Charles roused himself wearily. 'Do you want to go, Stuart?'

The servant kissed his hands. 'Not unless your Majesty sends me.'

Charles clung to him. They were both in tears now. 'Everybody deserts me. I cannot bear it. Stay with me, Stuart. We were through very much together, you and I. Do you remember the morning of Culloden, and your pressing me to eat?' He ended brokenly: 'I would that food had choked me before I came to this!'

My Lord Elcho had grown stout and uncomely with the passage of the years. He had never

obtained his pardon from the Government, and dragged out an empty, unsatisfying existence on the Continent, enlivened by occasional meetings with various members of his family, attempts at matrimony with different heiresses, and reunions with Jacobite exiles as poor and discontented as himself. Not a penny had he received of his fifteen hundred guineas. Charles promised repayment of the sum as soon as he was crowned, an event a trifle too remote to satisfy Elcho. In his restless wanderings, homesick, disgusted, and bored with foreign ways, my Lord drifted once more within the orbit of Clementina Walkinshaw.

Clementina and her daughter were existing on Henry's meagre bounty in a convent at Meaux. She styled herself Countess Alberstroff, and had some countenance, if no support, from France. But her life was an uncertain business, and she was acutely anxious about Charlotte's future. If she were to die, what would be Charlotte's fate? Lord Elcho, her one-time admirer, might be moved to help her for the sake of that dead romance. She would plead with him to find a suitable husband for her daughter. Any hope that Charles might bestir himself in such a matter was laughable.

Elcho obeyed her summons, moved by a mingling of curiosity, sentiment, and a mean desire to hear tales to Charles's detriment. He thanked Heaven for his own escape as he sat in the convent parlour, opposite to the worn, plain, sad-faced woman, in whom he could trace scant likeness to the black-eyed siren of Bannockburn House. Had he ever admired her, wished to marry her? She poured out her woes freely.



It was a relief at last to speak of all that she had kept locked in her heart for so long. She did not disguise Charles's cruelty to her. Often he had struck her, she admitted, as much as fifty times in one day. His groundless jealousy drove him to absurd devices and outrages. Her flight from him, planned and undertaken in sheer defence of herself and the child, had never been forgiven. 'He has not supported either of us by one penny. We might have starved for aught he learned or cared.' Clementina wrung her thin hands. 'He is cruel, heartless. He refused even to write to the French Ambassador to procure me support from the French court.'

'Ah, the Duc de Choiseul is not his friend. He never forgave the Prince for visiting the opera in 1746 at a time when his adherents were suffering on the scaffold for his Cause.' Elcho grinned maliciously.

Clementina's lined face softened. 'Would you have had him stay at home, praying for their souls? He was not heartless then. He was only wretched. He could not bear to be alone, thinking of all the misery and death that his expedition had brought about. He needed diversion, company, music——'

She fell into a muse. They were so far apart, their little romance so long withered, that Elcho felt no jealousy. It seemed impossible to shake her loyalty to Charles. When Elcho sneered at his former leader, Clementina, with kindling eyes, defended her lover. They must not judge him as they would judge lesser men. From such meagre accounts as drifted to her ears she gathered that he was most unhappy, solitary, poor, his

position unrecognised in Rome. She ended courageously : 'He should marry, and find solace in children.'

Elcho jeered : 'Who would have him? He has not much to offer any princess, and I doubt if he would look lower than royal blood.'

'Why should he?' She spoke calmly. 'He is the King.'

They talked a little of Charlotte. Elcho promised to further her matrimonial prospects as well as he could. He kept his word, but unfortunately the question of differing creeds scared away the possible suitor. As he took his leave of Clementina, they looked at one another. They were only two out of the countless hundreds whom Prince Charles's Cause had ruined for a lifetime. It was too late to retract the step which both had taken, too late for remorse, if indeed the woman ever felt any. Elcho had been ambitious and deluded. She had only followed her heart, which led her into dark lands, desolate places. Each was too tired, too emptied of emotion to feel great pity for the other. They had staked, played, lost. The gamble had been scarcely worth the name.

The Stuarts were not enthusiastically sought after as bridegrooms. James had had to send his emissaries to scour Europe before a princess was found willing to share exile, sweetened by the glamour of regaining his throne. Charles had still less to offer in person, position, or possibilities. Once his ambitions had soared to the Czarina. His name was even now linked with that of a daughter of France. The old game of matri-

monial wire-pulling, secrecy, and intrigue began afresh. After minor refusals and mishaps, King Charles the Third was paying his addresses (through a third party) to Louise, daughter of the Princess de Stolberg, a damsel of eighteen, reported fair to see. Charles was fifty-two, and in no ways attractive, but the beauty preferred the rôle of queen, even an uncrowned and unrecognised one, to that of canoness. It was the second time that Charles had carried off a lady from a religious house. His bride boasted a long pedigree, but an empty purse. There was no shadow of affection on either side. From start to finish the marriage was a cold, passionless business. Louise's feelings were a compound of ambition, excitement, exultation, and, as soon as she saw him, a determination to regard the bridegroom as a disagreeable necessity. Charles wished for companionship and an heir, a legitimate son to be a thorn in the side of the Hanoverian dynasty. France was willing to lend her aid to engineer the match. The long tale of letters, embassies, private meetings, consultations, quarrels between those interested or involved, culminated in the wedding of two people who had never met before the marriage day. It chanced to be Good Friday, an ill-omen, more than justified by subsequent events.

All the world loves a lover, but the world of Rome took scant notice of Charles's marriage. As the newly-wedded pair drove in state through the old city there were few to gape curiously, none to be sufficiently interested to wish them well. In a room high up in one of the humbler quarters, two women waited eagerly to see the

procession. One was a tall, thin creature, her black hair nearly white now, lank and lifeless, her black eyes heavy and sunken. She was so plainly dressed as to be shabby. Her companion was a girl about the same age as the bride. She too was tall, big-boned, with promise of handsomeness when she should have outgrown the lankiness of her teens. Her profile was very like a certain side-face struck on medals treasured by devout Jacobites. It gave Clementina Walkinshaw a pang every time that she looked at her daughter. Charlotte was her father's child. God grant that she might not have inherited his disposition as well as his features.

She was the more eager of the two. After her scrambling childhood, there had come long years of poverty-stricken seclusion in obscure and uncomfortable convents. This visit to Rome, actually accomplished, thrilled her young being. Her mother had given scant reason for bringing her here. Her august Papa was about to be married. Clementina spoke hurriedly, looking away from the girl's face. It might be advisable to go to Rome, to try to obtain a personal interview. He should at least support, if he would not recognise, his daughter. Charlotte's own letters to Charles, dutiful, pathetic, had met with no response. Clementina's heart swelled. This child-bride, Charlotte's own contemporary, would enjoy all the honours and advantages that should be Charles's daughter's. She would give Charles children, born in lawful wedlock, while Charlotte, the despised, the nameless, might eat her heart out in the seclusion of a convent, supported on the scant sum supplied by Henry to her mother.

A rumour that Charles was actually married to Miss Walkinshaw had crept about, and only the threat of stopping the meagre supplies on which both existed had driven Clementina to sign a paper stating that she had never been Charles's wife. It was her last humiliation. After that she cared nothing for herself, but there was Charlotte. Charlotte must have her opportunity of a suitable settlement in life. An allowance, a husband—Clementina's ideas were vague. She had some misty notion that if Charles only saw his daughter his dormant feelings, natural and paternal, must be aroused. She had taken great pains with Charlotte's upbringing and education, given her what poor advantages she could. . . .

'Mama! Look!' Charlotte's eager voice broke up her sad reverie. 'They are coming. See!'

Clementina rose wearily and joined her daughter at the window.

It was an April day, the sky softly blue, with here and there a fleck of white cloud. Bird-choruses and the scent of hyacinths filled the air. Rome, old, grey, gracious, just awakened from the gloom of her Lenten austerities, sat upon her everlasting hills, indifferent to the little comedies, the tea-cup tragedies played out in her narrow streets which had been witness of so many. The rattle of wheels and the sharp noise of horse-hoofs sounded louder, nearer. The two women leaned out.

A king, even a crownless and throneless monarch, is not wedded every day. So at least reflected Charles, and he was determined that no expense and display should be spared as he entered the Eternal City with Louise—bridegroom



and bride. First there clattered four couriers on horseback, followed by the King's post-chaise, then Louise's coach-and-six, with two other post-chaises close behind, and behind these again the coach containing the royal couple. Clementina and Charlotte had neither eyes nor attention for the two coaches-and-six conveying Charles's attendants, nor the sumptuous vehicles that held the attendants of the Cardinal of York. They stared wistfully at the central figures in the cavalcade, no grudge, only sadness and longing, in each heart. Charlotte was young enough, girl enough, to envy the new queen her jewels, her bridal finery, but candour compelled her to acknowledge her fair, smiling beauty. Clementina's thin hands were clenched. The bride was lovely, but haughty, supercilious, with an intellectual brow and a look of high intelligence which boded ill for her future tolerance of Charles's stupidity and ill-humours. 'She will not make him happy,' ran the dark stream of Clementina's mournful thoughts. 'She has only married him for what she imagines his position to be. When she finds herself slighted and neglected by all of any rank and note, she will avenge her disappointment and wounded dignity upon him. Eh, my poor Charles, how you are changed!'

She could scarcely endure to think of him as he had become. She thrust aside the image of that red face, vacant, stupid expression, coarsened figure. To her he was always the slim lover of those stolen hours at Bannockburn House. Her sad eyes filled with tears. Charlotte did not perceive them. She was still leaning from the window.

When she drew back, after the last carriage had vanished, her talk was all of the bridal pair. 'I am glad we have seen her, Mama. She is as beautiful as they said. And my august Papa, how stately he looked.' Her face glowed. 'I was talking of the marriage to our landlady last night.—Oh, pray do not start, Mama. She has not the least idea who we are.—She says'—the eager talker rippled on, sickening Clementina's aching heart—'that the Cardinal, my Uncle Henry, *n'est-ce pas?* is vastly pleased with the match. He has made his new sister-in-law a present of a gold snuff-box set with diamonds of great value. But what shall I tell you? The outside, beautiful as it is, is nothing in comparison of the beauty within. Oh, my dear Mama, it contained an order upon his banker to pay her down forty thousand Roman crowns, near equal to ten thousand sterling, with a settlement of four thousands pounds a year upon her. To think, Mama, that there should be so much money in all the world. Her Majesty can never spend it.'

Clementina's mouth was grim. The Cardinal could be very generous to the fair woman who was willing to halve his responsibilities by marrying his solitary and unsatisfactory brother, but to that brother's mistress and his illegitimate niece he could pay a bare pittance that just sufficed to keep them alive. 'For aught I know, his father may have ordered him to; otherwise Charlotte and I might starve for all the Stuarts cared. He has cut it down as far as he decently can.' Suddenly she collapsed, weeping, in Charlotte's warm young arms. The bitter realisation had come to her that when Louise should scorn and

fail Charles, she, Clementina Walkinshaw, would have no right to go to him with her poor love and her poorer comfort. In any case, she mused sourly, he would want neither.

The visit to Rome produced no good results. Rather it steeled Charles's heart still more against his daughter. It had long been closed to Clementina. He had never recovered from his amazed fury at her desertion of him, her daring and address in leaving him so secretly and stealthily, her refusal to give up Charlotte. His nearest attendants never heard him mention her name. She might be dead for any sign he gave. Unfortunately she was not dead, but alive and actually in Rome, with his daughter. Louise shrugged her shoulders at the irregular situation, then considered neither novel nor shocking, but she was not minded to have her bridegroom made ridiculous by the presence of his ex-mistress and illegitimate offspring in the same city as his new queen. They were given a strong hint to depart, and presently withdrew to the drear seclusion of their convent at Meaux. Charles subsequently made the proposal that Charlotte should enter his household on the strict condition that she severed all relations with her mother. The daughter of Charles Edward had inherited a double portion of his spirit. She wrote back, refusing to abandon Clementina, which gave Charles an excuse for ignoring both indefinitely.

The newly-married couple continued with their life of hollow pretence. Louise had expected to be received in Rome with royal honours. When

she found herself unnoticed and ignored, she sulked and grumbled. The pair moved to Florence, where the Florentine nobility paid scant attention to either. Charles slipped insensibly back into his old bad habits. The non-arrival of a Prince of Wales seriously disappointed him. He and Louise had nothing in common. She was sharp-tongued, swift-witted, delighting in intellectual society, rapidly bored with her dull husband, impatient, and far from suffering fools gladly. Charles was bewildered by her quick turns of speech, her impish hints and stabs, her wider mental range and outlook. He grew jealous, suspicious, crafty. The miserable years dragged on, Charles no nearer attaining his ambition, Louise querulous and soured. Her beauty should have shone in great society, her wit rubbed its keen edges against the blades of more brilliant brains. She found herself tied to a man many years her senior—a sot, her intellectual inferior—whose sole advantage over her was his bodily strength. She began to fear his rages as Clementina had feared them. Her eyes glanced round for escape, for refuge. The Cardinal was her friend, and believing in her, pitied her sincerely. (It was not the least of Louise's successes, though little to her credit, that she hoodwinked Henry for so long.) But he solemnly declared it her duty to remain with her husband, and Louise did not reckon on his countenance and protection should she violate her marriage vow. It was a sad situation for a woman so young and beautiful. *Hélas !*

Louise's deliverer was at hand. One of the few amusements shared in and still enjoyed by

this discordant pair was the opera. Charles could no longer follow the story or appreciate the music, but the glittering lights, the crowded audiences, the applause gave him a faint pleasure. Louise liked to sit in the front of their box, displaying her beauty, Clementina Sobieski's remaining jewels flashing on her white bosom. The young Italian poet Alfieri saw her thus one night, and, one hand upon his wildly-beating heart, clutched with the other the sleeve of a Florentine acquaintance. 'Who is that lady?' gasped the Byron of Italy.

'Which?' The acquaintance freed himself, and surveyed the theatre. 'Opposite? The Contessa Marivelli. She has had three husbands, my singer. Do you covet the honour of becoming the fourth?'

'No, no, no.' The excited poet almost danced. 'Yonder, yonder. She with the breast of snow, and the eyes—it would take one of my sonnets to do justice to those eyes.'

'You had better not try,' the other grinned. 'The lady has a husband. You do not see him? No, for he is probably snoring at the back of the box. Who is she? Cease to pinch me, and I will tell you in a word. She is the wife of the Count of Albany, whom some style the Pretender, as he aspires to the British throne. He led a rising to that end more years ago than I can reckon. The lady would like to be called the Queen of England——'

'The Queen of England!' The enraptured Alfieri drew a shattering sigh. 'Nay, rather should she be dubbed the Queen of Hearts!'



### CHAPTER III.

‘Do not laugh at me ;  
For, as I am a man, I think this lady  
To be my child Cordelia.

And so I am, I am.’

SHAKESPEARE.

LOUISE had heaped the crowning humiliation on Charles's unlucky head. She had made him look ridiculous. The world, critical, unpitying, shrugs its shoulders at the man who drives his wife from him into the refuge of another man's arms. Rome, Florence, all Italy laughed at the story. Faint echoes of it crossed the Channel and caused a new ache in the hearts of the remaining loyalists, who at the time of the marriage had toasted the new Queen's beauty and drunk the health of the unborn Prince of Wales. Louise played her cards superbly well. Fear, as much as boredom and her quickly reciprocated passion for Alfieri, stimulated her energies and inventive faculties. After a hideous scene, in which she had been rescued from Charles's hands by the remnant of a household well accustomed to such happenings, she copied the example of her long-dead mother-in-law. Clementina had taken refuge from James in a convent. Louise did the same, certainly with more reason. Charles might batter on the convent doors as much as he pleased. Louise was safe from his violence, under the protection of

that Church to which he had made a tardy and unenthusiastic return. Henry, unworldly, totally unaccustomed to the wiles and intrigues of women, sincerely pitied and believed in his fascinating sister-in-law. He had heard no hint of Alfieri, and looked upon Louise as the newest victim of Charles's tyranny, stupidity, and cruelty. He reduced his brother's allowance in order to subsidise Louise. Applauded by both Pope and Cardinal, the lady settled down to an edifying, if dull existence, only enlivened by the discreet visits of her poet. Not until his company had become a permanent arrangement were Henry's eyes opened.

The dismal years went on. Charles withdrew more and more into his seclusion. Little glimpses of him were given by curious visitors to Italy in their letters home. A lady met him at a reception, and was struck with the ruin of good looks and the ghosts of former graciousness and stateliness. A man had the curiosity to watch him, a bent figure in a velvet coat, leaving the opera with two attendants. A young traveller on the Continent, whose family had long served the Stuarts, did not rest until he had sought out Charles's valet, the only English-speaking person in his household, and craved an audience of his master. He carried away a melancholy cameo of a stooped, shadowy, pseudo-king, who gave him a trembling hand to kiss and wished him well. In the darkness of a gaunt room, lighted by two candles, Charles practised playing the bagpipes, calling up none knew what memories and sorrows from his brief hour of glory. Often his hands would

lay down the instruments and caress absently the loaded pistols which lay on a table beside him. He was very solitary, estranged from Henry, his magnificent constitution at last breaking up, his old ambition dormant but not dead, in truth the most vital thing about him.

Stuart, long grown from the position of valet to that of confidant and friend, pitied the womanless desolation of his master's days. He remembered that in a severe illness of Charles's the previous year he had had his long-neglected daughter legitimised, created Duchess of Albany, and made his heiress. She was still unmarried, still living in a convent with the mother whom she had refused to leave, no longer very young. Charles toyed with the idea, tentatively presented to him, of sending for his daughter. When a courier had been dispatched bearing a letter commanding her to come to Florence on receipt of it, he fell into melancholy and foreboding. She would not come. Clementina would taste revenge at last by refusing to part with her. Henry, annoyed with her legitimation and Charles's tardy recognition of his responsibilities, would support both women in their contumacy. Charles was reaping as he had sown, and the harvest was mildewed and blighted. The days went on. There had been time for the return of his courier, an answer. . . .

‘At last, Charlotte, at last!’

‘Mama, must I leave you?’

‘Yes, yes. It is what I have prayed for all these years. Don't you see? Cannot you understand, my child? Your Papa is old, lonely,

neglected. I cannot go to him. I have not the right. Besides, he does not want me, but you. You are his child, his heiress——’

‘Mama, it is not for that. If I can be a help, a comfort——’

‘You must not lose a moment. Oh, Charlotte, you will want all your love and patience. Write to me, never forget me, but it might be wiser not to mention me to your Papa.’

‘I can tell better when I see him, Mama. But—if only you were coming, too.’

They wept, clinging to one another. The long-awaited, long-deferred, well-nigh hopeless thing had come to them at last. Like every other earthly object of desire there was bitterness and sorrow mingled with attainment.

Clementina packed for her daughter with trembling hands. She saw her into a coach, adequately attended as became the Duchess of Albany. She kissed her for the last time. It was their parting in this world, though neither guessed it. Charlotte was to follow her father the year after his own death. Clementina’s pilgrimage was to endure for eighteen years longer, into the new century—an old, hopeless, solitary woman, bereft of child and interests. The Walkinshaw family had long since forsaken her. The French Revolution, reducing much of the Cardinal’s affluence, deprived her of most of her meagre means of support. Pitiful legacies of six silver spoons ; a library consisting of half a dozen nondescript volumes ; a small gold box to Coutts the banker, who had done her some service ; a few coins for such of her relatives as might still survive—were the only souvenirs left of a miser-

able life, once marked out in the dark pages of history by her association with a Stuart prince. As a woman, she was loyal, if mistakenly loving; as a mother, unselfish and devoted. Of a truth there might be a quiet place in some far-off heaven for such as Clementina Walkinshaw.

The coach rattled into the courtyard. The doors were flung open. Servants ran out to see to the baggage. A lean-faced Scotsman hurried forward and handed down the tall, big-boned, cheerful-looking young woman who greeted him graciously. 'You must be Stuart, my Papa's friend?'

He bowed to kiss her hand. 'His Majesty is hoping for your Royal Highness's arrival, but does not know of it, madam. There was no courier——'

'No, no. I thought that I should come quicker than any. Pray, take me to the King.'

The house felt chill, cheerless. Charlotte shivered, suddenly apprehensive. How neglected, how comfortless everything seemed. The place cried out for a woman's hand, a woman's touch. She was ushered into a large, semi-dark room, where a tall man, prematurely bowed and broken, sat at a table, turning over the contents of some jewel-cases. Charles had bought the diamonds half hopefully. Women liked pretty things. If Charlotte came, she should be fitly decked. His bemused, weary mind played with the idea of a match for her, a medal struck in her honour. Suddenly he pushed the gems aside. They were useless gauds. She would not come. No subject, no child had any idea of their duty to him. He



was alone, neglected—forsaken by wife, brother, adherents. . . .

‘Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Albany, sir, craves to wait upon your Majesty.’

She almost ran forward, outdistancing Stuart’s murmur. She fell upon her knees beside him. ‘It is my august Papa. I should have known you anywhere from your portraits, sir.’

He took off her bonnet with old, trembling hands. He stroked her hair, peering into her face. ‘Charlotte? Is it Charlotte?’

‘Yes, yes, sir. It is indeed your poor Charlotte.’ She kissed his hands reverently. ‘Has my Papa a blessing for his child?’

He took her in his arms. He kissed her, seeing the likeness to the Stuarts, to himself. She could have wept for him, but she held her chin high. She was his daughter, and he wanted her, two golden diadems to crown her neglected head. She prayed that she might never fail in love, in duty, in respect. So many had failed him, her poor Papa.

‘Charlotte! Charlotte! Where are you?—Stuart, have you seen Her Royal Highness?’

‘I am here, sir.’ She was beside him, calm, smiling. ‘Papa, it is a perfect day. Will not your Majesty be pleased to command my company for a drive?’

Charles pondered. ‘It may rain, my dear.’

‘Papa, there is not a cloud showing. Yesterday the first anemones were out. I am longing to show them to your Majesty.’ She coaxed, and won her way. ‘And I have a mighty friendly letter to read to you, sir, from the Cardinal

of York. I think he is coming to like your Charlotte.'

'Charlotte, he may want to take you away. You must never leave me. Promise that you will not!'

'I promise, sir. I have no desire to marry, and my place and duty are beside my august Papa. See, here is the coach. I think your Majesty should take a warmer coat, though.' She turned with a quick order to a servant.

His failing mind wandered amongst old scenes as he tottered out to the vehicle on her strong arm. 'Did I ever tell you, Charlotte, of the time I was dressed up in woman's clothes, to escape my enemies?' His face puckered. 'I cannot remember. I am so bothered in the head.'

'If your Majesty did, I have forgotten, sir. I should like to hear it again.' She lifted her face, earnest and attentive, to his. She was an ideal listener, but always quick to scent danger in a topic, to forbid any mention of painful or controversial subjects. Charles was wholly in her capable hands. For her part she felt the old charm, and asked no better than to be constantly by his side.

The 'Forty-five was a forbidden pasture. Charlotte had learned of Louise's scornful smile when Charles was wont to babble to her of his pitiful triumphs. He seldom mentioned these things to Charlotte, nor did she ever introduce them into any conversation. Her father saw few strangers, but during a ceremonious visit from one Mr Greatheart, an English politician, Charlotte allowed her usual vigilance to relax. Charles was listening contentedly to Mr Greatheart's chatter

of affairs in England. Charlotte, satisfied, withdrew to an adjoining room and took up her pen to write to Clementina. She was putting down a guarded account of Charles's diminishing health and strength, when the sound of a heavy fall startled her. She hurried in, to find him prone on the floor. When he had been carried to his bed, she demanded anxiously of the alarmed visitor the cause of this collapse.

‘Madam, I but spoke of the campaign of 1745. His Majesty was reluctant to pursue the topic, but I urged it. We talked of his strategy, his victories, his—alas!—defeat. I alluded to the cruelties practised on a helpless and defenceless people following the battle of Culloden. He had been collected, enthusiastic, displaying a vivid memory of all that momentous time, but at the recollection of the Duke of Cumberland's barbarities he fell to the floor in a convulsion. Madam, I crave your pardon if I have unwittingly done him any injury.’

She shook her head. ‘It was not your fault, sir. You could not know. But it was vastly unwise to speak of Scotland or the Highlanders to my father. No one dares to mention these subjects in his presence.’

Charles had not forgotten his life's ambition, his life's undying hope. One day, puzzled by noises in his bedroom, Charlotte made an excuse to enter. Charles, flushed and panting, was bending over a strong-box, which he shut hastily and thrust under the bed at her approach. She shook her head.

‘Your Majesty should not try to move a heavy

thing like that box, sir. Could not Stuart get it out, if you require a paper from it?’

‘It does not contain papers.’ He peered at her slily. ‘There’s money in it, Charlotte—ten thousand sequins.’

‘Money? But is it wise to keep so large a sum in a box under your bed, Papa?’

His head oscillated foolishly. ‘I consider it advisable to have a sum of money by me, my dear, on which I can immediately lay my hand.’

‘But, sir’—Charlotte was puzzled—‘why should your Majesty require it?’

Charles nodded solemnly. ‘I might be summoned to England at any time. It is as well to be prepared.’ He stared wistfully at her. ‘They might want me to mount the throne of my ancestors after all, and I should need immediate funds for the journey in order to lose no time. Eh?’

His eyes were grown too dim to read the pity in hers. ‘Yes, sir. I understand.’ Her tone was very gentle. ‘Your Majesty is perfectly right to be in readiness should such an event occur.’ She put her arms about him. She laid her fresh cheek against his lined, fallen face. ‘In the meantime, your poor girl has made you a little happier, has she not, sir?’

The Count of Albany was dying in Rome. The news went about the city, which received it with indifference. The sombre palace was hushed, watching. In the great bed-chamber where, sixty-seven years before, Charles Edward Stuart had come into the world as reluctantly as if he realised the life of failure and frustration awaiting him,

he was lying, speechless, motionless, to all outward seeming unconscious of anything that passed around him. His daughter scarcely left his side. His brother wept by him, prayed for him. His few faithful servants were at hand, but he spoke to none of them. Possibly the failing brain was painting the scenes of the past, little haphazard incidents, faces, individuals, starting out of the confused phantasmagoria of dead, irrevocable days. A white beach, and a vessel drifting towards it. Lochiel's proud, stately figure, his Camerons at his heels. Holyrood, grim, blood-stained, and the brief weeks of state and revel. The snowy lanes of England, and stupid mouths gaping as his army marched by. Manchester, grey in rain. The Green of Glasgow—Falkirk's sodden muir—a house called Bannockburn. Wind, dash, thrust, and victory. The thing called Hawley fleeing before his Highlanders. There was a fire-lit room and a dark woman. She had forsaken him, yet was it not she who moved about him now? He was too tired to tell. He heard the thunder of a voice repeating Latin. No; it was the boom and break of waves upon a shingly shore. A tossing boat and the sting of flying spray. A girl with calm hazel eyes slept, while a grotesque, petticoated figure kept watch over her. The pictures grew less distinct, the personalities distorted, unrecognisable. Whose was the face, lined, angered, seen against a background of cold sky and files of weary, dispirited men? There were women's faces too, patched, enamelled, with painted mouths that mocked at him. He tried to drive them from him, and saw instead a wide stretch of heather, purple under the



sunset. The wind was sighing in a band of reeds that fringed a loch. No ; it was the sound of bagpipes—shrill, exultant, inspiring—and the march of strong feet which trod to battle in his Cause. Many had failed him, as he in his turn had failed almost everyone. Only in the Highland hearts his reign was deathless and unshaken. Scotland does not judge. She loves—and remembers.

## EPILOGUE

MR SCOTT, the lawyer, had just concluded his business with Mr Stuart, a valued friend and client. As he escorted him to the door of his house in Edinburgh, the wintry air came in with keen breath. The houses opposite were tall and dun against a grey, snow-laden sky. The cold light fell upon the caller's garb, black and sombre.

Mr Scott took an old acquaintance's privilege. 'I regret, sir, to perceive that you are in mourning. May I inquire if you have suffered any recent bereavement? If so, I beg to offer my condolences.'

'I thank you, sir.' Mr Stuart bowed. 'I have not suffered actual personal loss.'

'I am glad to hear it, sir. Then, might I venture to trespass upon our long intimacy by inquiring for whom you are wearing mourning?'

The other bent his head. He saw a ruined country, and a race whose loyalty to a hunted fugitive would never pass away. 'For my poor Chief, sir,' he answered.





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